

Experiment on customer insight and profiling of public space users in Malmi area

**GreenIN
Cities**

KYMP

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Introduction

Introduction

- The **Urban Environment Division of the City of Helsinki** is carrying out the **GreenInCities** initiative which focuses on developing customer-oriented methods for urban planning. The initiative emphasizes the importance of **customer insight** in the development of public spaces — including streets, squares, and green and recreational areas — to ensure that services are planned and delivered equitably for diverse groups of residents and visitors.
- As part of the **GIC initiative**, the team will pilot and refine **new approaches to customer understanding**, with a particular focus on **AI-assisted data mining, location-based data collection, and engagement with vulnerable population groups**. These methods aim to deepen the city's understanding of citizens' needs and experiences, supporting more inclusive and data-informed urban design.
- **Project Team:**
Project Manager Petra Väänänen-Leimu, Service Designers Katariina Tikkala and Essi Mikkola
- **Client:** Anu Kiiskinen and Kaisa Koskinen Urban Environment Division, City of Helsinki
Schedule: January–April 2025



Sisältö ja tavoitteet

Lähtökohdat ja menetelmät

Yleisten alueiden tarvekartoitus

Hanke-esitykset

Kaakon suurpiirin toimenpideohjelma
2022-2026

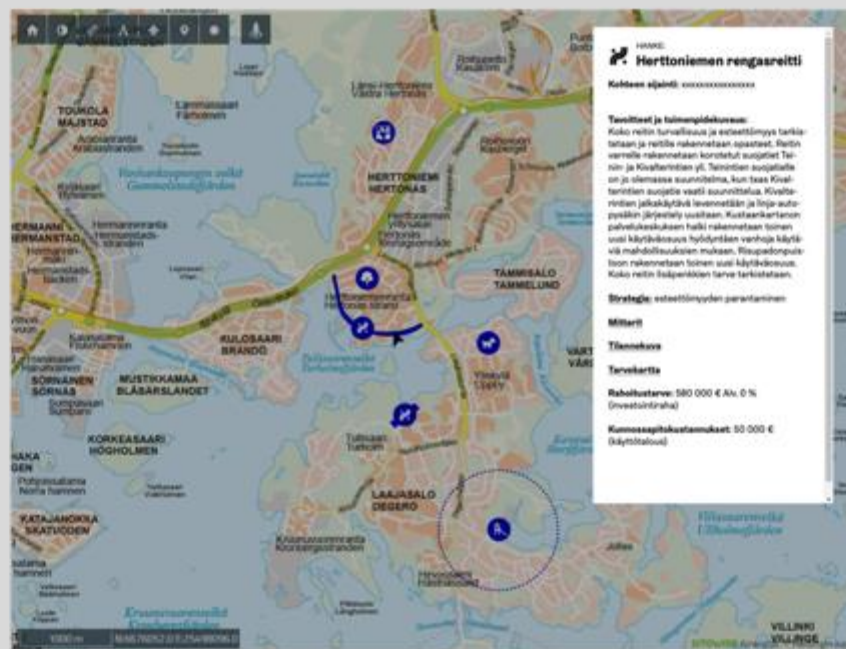
Hanke-esitykset

Kaakon suurpiirin yleisten alueiden tarveselvityksessä ja asukkaisten sekä yhdistysten vuorovaikutuksessa tunnistettiin uusia entisaasia ja laajaisia kunnostus- ja kehittämissuhteita. Kuusi kohdetta valittiin yleisten alueiden suunnitelman hankesijastaan. Hankkeiden valintaperusteita olivat kohteiden kunto ja turvallisuus, asukaspaute sekä mahdollisuus toteuttaa Kaakon suurpiirille asetettuja strategisia tavoitteita. Valituista hankkeista laadittiin hankesuunnitelmat, joiden sisältöä esitellään alla.

Valitut hankkeet ovat priorisointijärjestyksessä:

1. Mäntäskäiden katusuunnitelma ja Seurabaasin aukio
2. Herttoniemen rengasreitti
3. Munkkiniemen pysäköintipaikan muuttaminen puoleksi
4. Juhlakseen alueurheilun spastisuusmuunnos
5. Uusi kortti alueella Leppäsaari (Suurpuiston)
6. Luomunhoitosuunnitelman tekeminen

Alla näet hankkeet kartalla. Voit klikata hanketta, jolloin näet tarkemmat hankesuunnitelmat.



Project Objectives

- Generate deeper insights into the service needs of different user groups to support the development of public spaces, including streets, squares, and green and recreational areas.
- Understand how the needs of various customer groups differ, and create customer profiles based on these insights that can be applied in the planning of public areas both in Malmi and more broadly across the city.
- Develop and pilot new methods for customer understanding, with a particular focus on describing cultural and social phenomena through spatial data.
- Explore the needs of vulnerable user groups in greater depth and identify effective ways to engage and include them in urban planning processes.

Helsinki

Hae yhteystietoja ja numeroita

Hae yhteystietoja

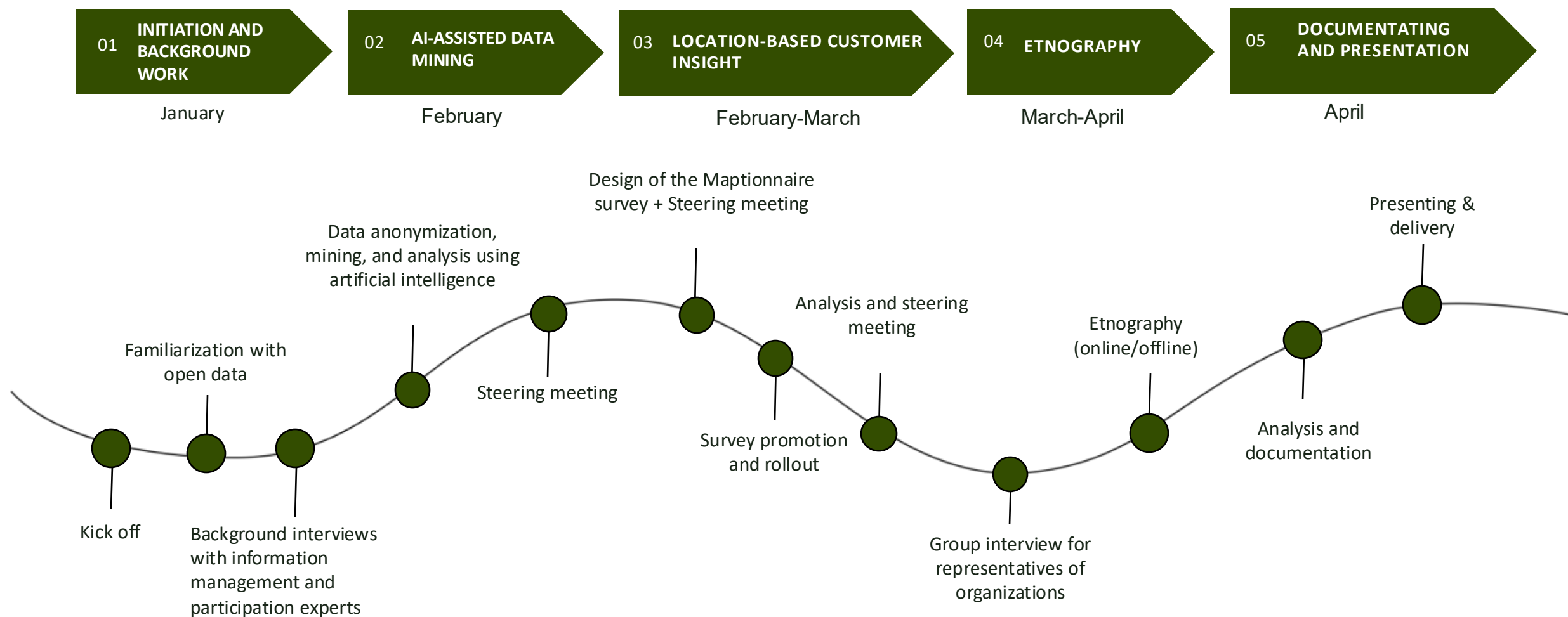
Hae

The project consisted of three pilot initiatives, which generated insights both on the phenomenon level from the Malmi area and on effective ways to incorporate the perspectives of diverse city residents into urban development processes

1. AI-assisted data mining to build a baseline understanding	2. Location-based resident insights and distinct profiles to illustrate expectations for the development of public spaces	3. Inclusion of vulnerable groups through ethnographic methods and interviews
- We mapped existing documents and their key findings to serve as background information for the study. - We defined what new data should be collected in the subsequent phases of the project.	- Maptionnaire survey, through which we collected Malmi-specific, phenomenon-level data based on geo-spatial information. - Mapping of differing motives and priorities for the development of public spaces. - Tested the development of a profiling model that could be applied more broadly in other areas as well.	- Qualitative interviews with NGO experts to identify relevant groups and understand their needs. - Ethnographic fieldwork and contextual interviews with vulnerable city residents. - Testing and developing a combined methodological approach that integrates the perspectives of both experts and residents.
Outcomes: - Baseline understanding of Malmi's public areas, their strengths, and key development needs. - Insights into hard-to-reach and vulnerable groups, along with best practices for identifying and understanding their needs. - Learnings and best practices on the use of artificial intelligence in analysis. - Guidelines for utilizing AI and prompts in similar research projects.	Outcomes: - Summary of the strengths and key development needs of Malmi's public areas. - Approximately 5–7 user profiles of public space users, illustrating the needs and expectations of different city residents regarding development. - A replicable model for creating profiles in other research contexts.	Outcomes: - Deeper understanding of how the needs of vulnerable groups are expressed and realized in Malmi. - Practical models and learnings on how their voices can be effectively heard and included.

All three phases **produced phenomenon-level insights** that help to understand the development needs of public spaces and **provide learnings on how the participation of diverse city residents can be improved** in the development of public areas.

Process and a timetable





Starting point

Starting point: Summarised findings of AI –assisted datamining

The aim of this phase was to determine what information about the development needs of Malmi's public areas and residents' wishes was already available, and to identify ways to deepen this knowledge base.

The data sources were identified in collaboration with both experts from the City of Helsinki and external specialists. The collected material was analyzed using artificial intelligence, and the key themes were summarized to support the next stages of the work.

Research questions guiding the data mining

The impact of the City of Helsinki's strategy on the planning of public areas

- What are the key focus areas in the city's strategy, particularly in the planning of public areas?

Residents' wishes and needs in the planning of public areas

- What are the main themes connected to residents' wishes and needs in the development of public areas?
- Which different user groups can be identified?
- What distinguishes the wishes and needs of different city residents in the development of public areas?

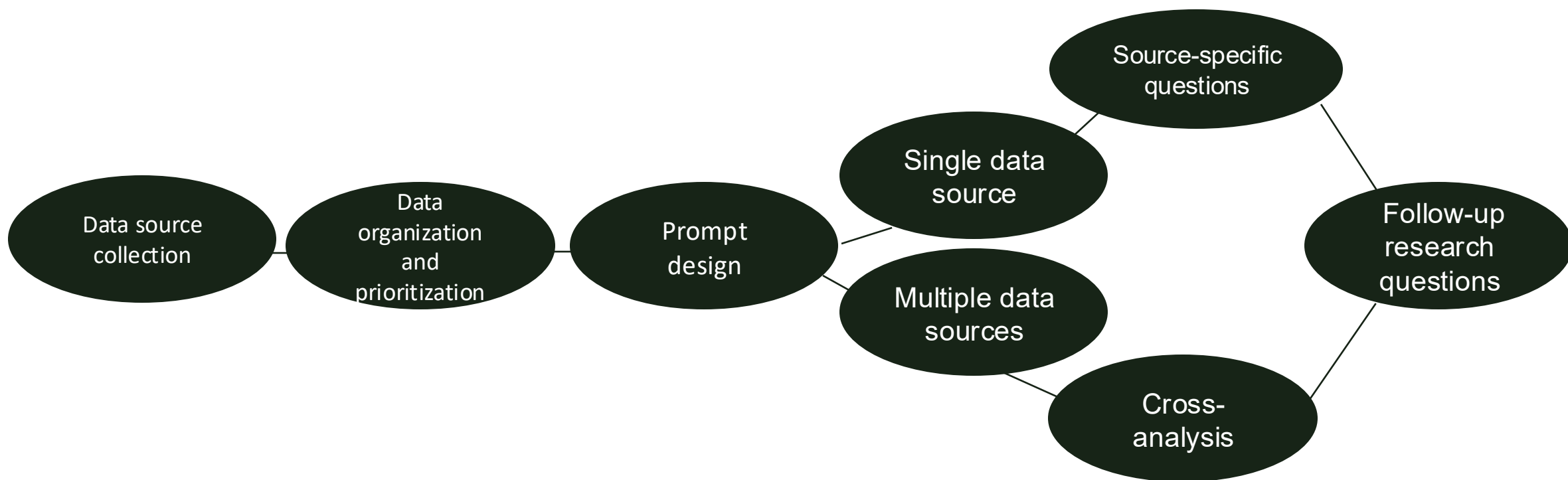
Distinctive characteristics and development needs of the Malmi area

- What kinds of public space-related phenomena emerge from the Malmi area?
- What are the main development priorities in Malmi?
- How are the key focus areas of the city strategy reflected in Malmi?

Needs and inclusion of vulnerable groups

- Which vulnerable groups can be identified in the Malmi area?
- What specific wishes do these groups have regarding the development of public areas?
- How can their voices be better represented in the planning process?

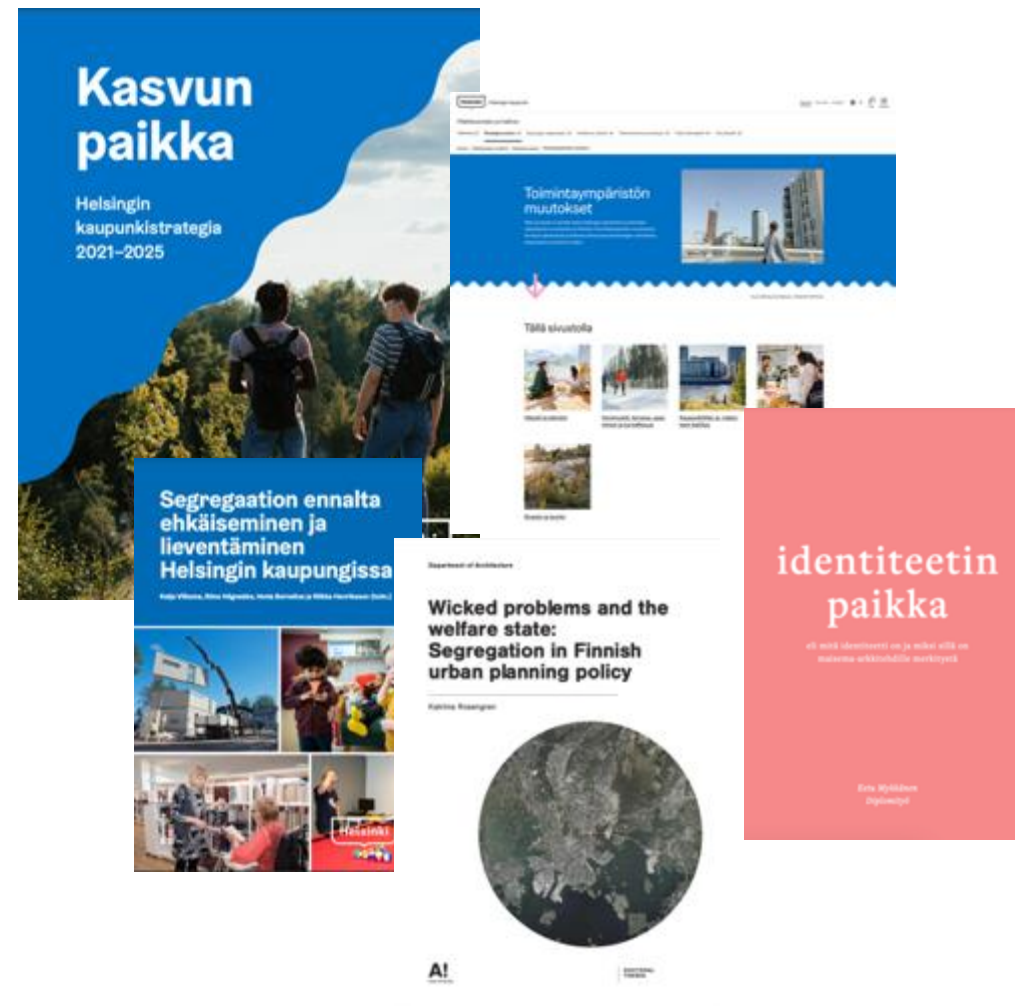
The process of AI-assisted data mining



1.

The strategic priorities of the City of Helsinki and their impact on the planning of public areas

- **Helsinki is investing in regional development and aims to prevent inequality**, particularly in Malmi, Mellunkylä, and Vuosaari.
- **Behind this is the growing phenomenon of segregation**: a complex issue that challenges the principle of equality in the welfare state and requires a holistic approach and multidisciplinary cooperation.
- **Public spaces** (parks, sports facilities, cultural centers) play a key role in promoting well-being and enhancing the attractiveness of neighborhoods.
- **Safety and accessibility** are being improved through barrier-free solutions, lighting, and the creation of more communal spaces.
- **The inclusion of young people and vulnerable groups** is a central goal, for example through youth centers and recreational facilities.
- **Planning solutions influence local identities** – design decisions can either strengthen or marginalize certain identities.

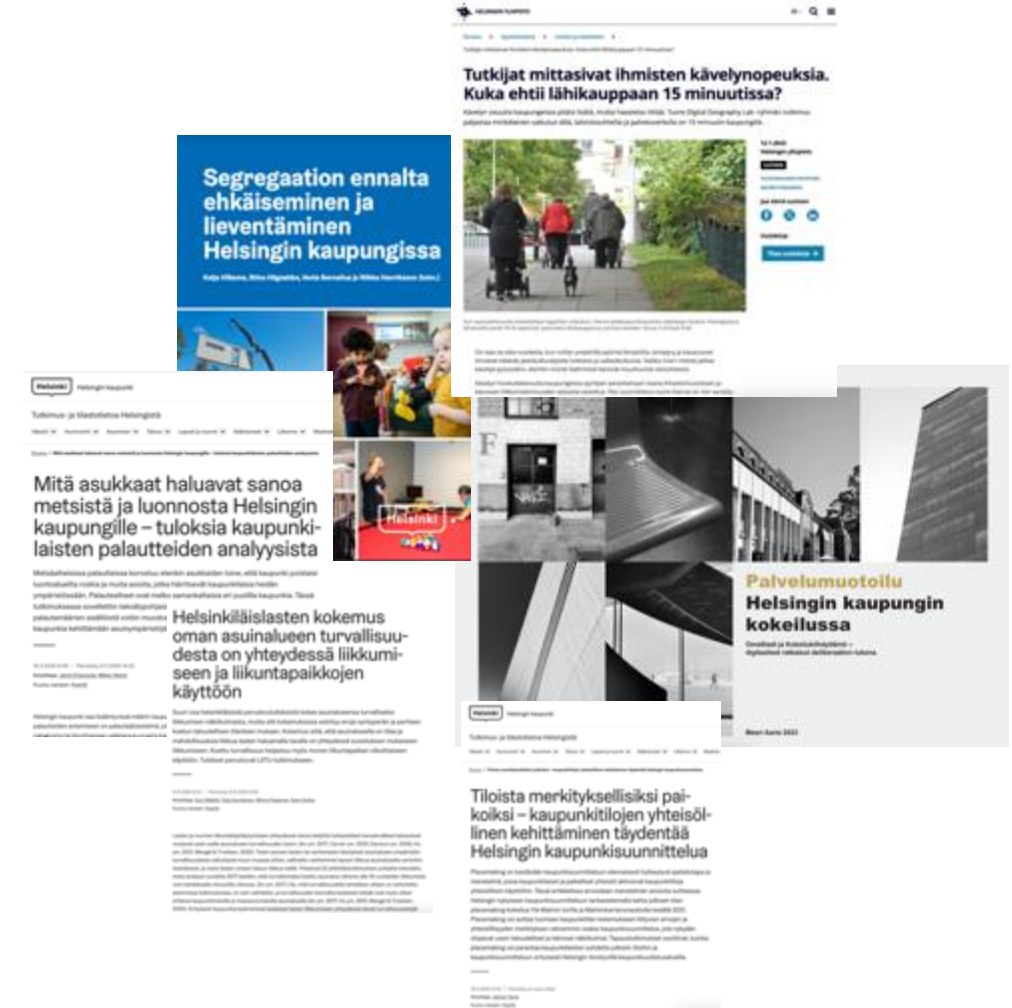


2 a.

Helsinki residents' wishes in the planning of public areas – themes that have emerged in recent years



- **Local nature and green areas:** Residents value nearby nature and wish to preserve it, favor natural maintenance, and prefer less construction.
- **Placemaking:** Place-based development and resident participation increase community cohesion. Pop-up style urban spaces can serve as important experiments for long-term place development.
- **Walkability and accessibility:** Although much of the city is accessible on foot (services within a 15-minute distance), regional differences exist. Infrastructure that supports walkability and multifunctional urban spaces enhance the vitality of neighborhoods.
- **Segregation:** Residents in low-income areas report lower well-being; diverse housing policies and an equitable distribution of services can help prevent segregation.
- **Participatory budgeting:** Citizen involvement in decision-making strengthens community spirit, but participation is not perceived as equal.



2 b.

Key resident groups and their differences from the perspective of needs

Working-age people vs. seniors

Employed residents value smooth transport connections and an efficient urban structure. Seniors emphasize accessibility, benches, and safe walking routes.

Possible conflict: In transport development, conflicts may arise between accessibility and efficiency.

Young people vs. other resident groups

Young people need places to gather, but their presence in public spaces may sometimes be perceived as a disturbance.

Possible conflict: The presence of young people may be restricted in certain places, such as shopping centers and stations.

Environmental awareness vs. construction needs

Some residents want to preserve green areas, while others emphasize the need for new housing and services.

Possible conflict: The impacts of construction projects on urban nature create tensions and opposing views.

Residents with immigrant backgrounds vs. long-term local residents

New residents seek inclusion and multilingual communication. Long-term residents may feel that their neighborhood is changing too much.

Possible conflict:

Tensions may arise between communities regarding opportunities for participation and the identity of the area.

Engaged citizens vs. passive residents

Active residents participate in decision-making, but not everyone is equally involved.

Possible conflict: Quieter groups (e.g., busy working-age people, minorities) may be left out or overlooked in the decision-making process.

3a.

Characteristics and development needs of the Malmi area

- **City center development:** The goal is to make Malmi's center an ecologically sustainable and diverse hub for Northeast Helsinki.
- **Safety:** Substance abuse and youth drug problems are perceived as serious issues; the station area and certain market squares are particular concerns.
- **Revitalizing urban culture:** Ala-Malmi Park is seen as an important event venue, with aspirations to develop it into a key attraction in Northeast Helsinki.
- **Walking and cycling conditions:** On many streets, the position of pedestrians is weak, and measures to improve safety are needed.
- **Development of green areas:** Residents wish for more benches, better lighting, and more diverse activities in parks.



3b. Phenomena and themes related to the use and development of public areas in Malmi

In the development of Malmi's public areas, emphasis is placed on improving the pedestrian environment and transport infrastructure, as well as supporting green spaces, urban culture, and community spirit.

In particular, enhancing conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and diversifying the uses of green areas are key themes

According to the Malmi city center vision, the goal is to develop the center into a strong-identity, attractive, and ecologically sustainable hub for Northeast Helsinki in the future.

It would combine diverse urban services, pleasant public spaces, and a vibrant urban culture. The core focus areas of the center's development include the station area, connecting upper and lower Malmi, increasing greenery, and diversifying services.

The Malmi Summer of Events has successfully enhanced the area's attractiveness and helped reduce negative perceptions. Free events and cultural offerings support the sense of community in the area.

Ala-Malmi Park is seen as an important venue and meeting place. There is a desire to enliven Ala-Malmi Square and other key public spaces through events and urban art, which would further strengthen the community spirit of the area.

The substance abuse situation and its impact on urban space are major concerns and areas for development in Malmi. Intoxicated individuals contribute to a sense of insecurity in public spaces.

In addition, youth drug use and the distribution of substances to minors are perceived as serious problems.

The needs and inclusion of disadvantaged groups

- Need for communal and free meeting places: loneliness is common especially among older adults, immigrants, and families.
- Young people, particularly native Finnish boys, need activities, spaces, and a sense of safety.
- Women with immigrant backgrounds require support for participation and social integration.
- Low-income families face financial barriers to participation.
- Safe, well-lit, and pleasant green areas support well-being.
- Fear of discrimination and racist encounters limits the use of public spaces.
- Accessibility is not always achieved – special groups face challenges in mobility and access.
- Multilingualism and cultural diversity are not sufficiently reflected in spaces or communication.
- Lack of information about available services and spaces hinders participation – public places play an important role as information channels.
- Among older people, the fear of falling restricts mobility – well-maintained routes and lighting increase the sense of safety.
- There is a need for intergenerational encounters and opportunities for social interaction.
- People struggling with substance abuse and homelessness need safe spaces and preventive support services.



AI-assisted data mining: outcome of the phase

The results of the data mining guided the planning of the next phase of the spatial (GIS-based) research and provided a solid foundation for interpreting the survey results.

Experiences from data mining and recommendations for future work (presented in more detail in the Appendices of this report):

- Essential work phases for collecting, organizing, and analyzing data sources
- Useful data sources for studying urban development and public areas
- Helpful example prompts

Themes selected for the Maptionnaire survey based on data mining:

- Use of and experiences with public areas in Malmi
- Accessibility and mobility in Malmi
- Safety and comfort in Malmi's public areas
- Combating segregation and strengthening Malmi's attractiveness
- Development of green and recreational areas in Malmi
- Participation in development: experiences and expectations

2.

Findings from the Maptionnaire survey

Introduction

An open, GIS-based map survey was conducted to identify user needs and pain points related to public areas in Malmi. Most respondents were reached online, as organizations and other actors shared the survey through their own channels. As a complement, we also went out to Malmi for one afternoon to encourage participation from residents who are not typically reached through online surveys.

Implementation and reach of the Maptionnaire survey

Objective: To collect data for the development of Malmi's urban environment (especially public areas) and to form user profiles of public space users.

Languages: Finnish, Swedish, English

Open period: 10 days (March 14–23, 2025)

Marketing:

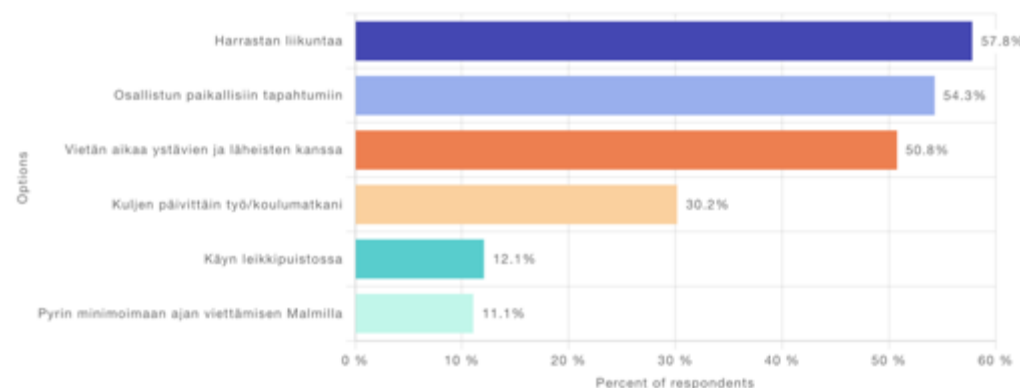
- We contacted organizations, associations, schools, and libraries operating in Malmi via email. In addition, we provided them with a printable poster featuring a QR code.
- We conducted in-person outreach at Malmitalo, Malmi Library, and near the railway station for one afternoon to encourage passers-by to respond to the survey (providing assistance with a tablet and a laptop). QR code posters were also placed on the noticeboards of Malmitalo and the library.

- A total of 287 people opened the survey, and 138 complete responses were received. Eighty-seven respondents partially filled in the survey but did not complete it; their open-ended text responses were still included in the analysis. The partially completed responses varied across background variables, suggesting that interruptions were more likely due to time constraints than the respondents' personal characteristics.
- Open-ended questions appeared to be a point where respondents often stopped answering — yet these questions provided the most depth to the responses.
- In our interpretation, disadvantaged groups did not participate widely in the survey, which had been anticipated. Therefore, special attention to their inclusion was given in the ethnographic research. Among the responses related to the airport area, lobbying voices advocating for the preservation of the airport were particularly prominent.

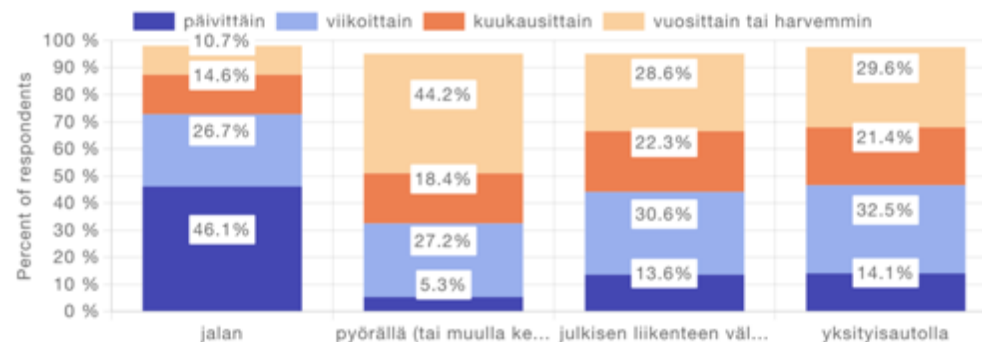
Implementation and reach of the Maptionnaire survey

- The survey mainly reached respondents over the age of 30 (90%), including employed people (55%) and retirees (31%). The respondents' primary language is Finnish (one respondent in Somali and two in Swedish).
- The respondents are active individuals who spend time in Malmi and for whom the area holds significant meaning in terms of everyday life, leisure, and community. Based on the responses, some participants are not residents of Malmi but city dwellers who frequently visit the area. (Chart 2.2)
- In Malmi, walking is the most common mode of transport (Chart 2.1). The second most popular form of transportation at the time of the survey (March) was public transport. Driving is an option for many, but not the primary way of getting around. Malmitalo and the library.

2.2 Kerro, miten vietät aikaa Malmilla? (valitse kaikki vaihtoehdot, jotka sopivat. Huomioi myös eri vuodenaikojen käyttö)



2.1 Kuinka usein arvioit liikkuvasi Malmilla?





1.

Strenghts of Malmi area

Strenghts of the Malmi area

1. Good transport connections
2. Versatile services
3. Village-like atmosphere
4. Closeness to nature and outdoor opportunities
5. Culture and events
6. Diversity and international character
7. The surroundings of Malmi Airport

The most frequently mentioned open-ended responses in order

"Malmi Airport is a spacious and pleasant area for walking, and in the evenings you can even see the starry sky."

"Internationality, which is reflected in the good selection of restaurants and grocery stores from different countries. Another strength is accessibility and approachability due to the area's down-to-earth character – here, we don't act pretentious".

"Malmi has strong roots and a strong identity. It's like a small town. The people of Malmi are friendly and helpful — there's a small village atmosphere here".

"Everything you need can be found in Malmi."

Favourite places and areas

1. **Malmi Airport and its surroundings**

Most frequently mentioned as an important area for recreation, outdoor activities, and nature, as well as a site of cultural and historical significance.

2. **Malmitalo and the library**

A hub for culture and community: events, art, concerts, a café, and a pleasant courtyard area

3. **The Longinoja stream and nature trails**

A peaceful stream environment and a popular outdoor route, especially near Karviaismäki

4. **Ala-Malmi Park and sports facilities**

Used for outdoor recreation, children's play, and exercise. Mentions also included Sepänmäki, Sunnuntaipalstat, and Sven Grahns Park.

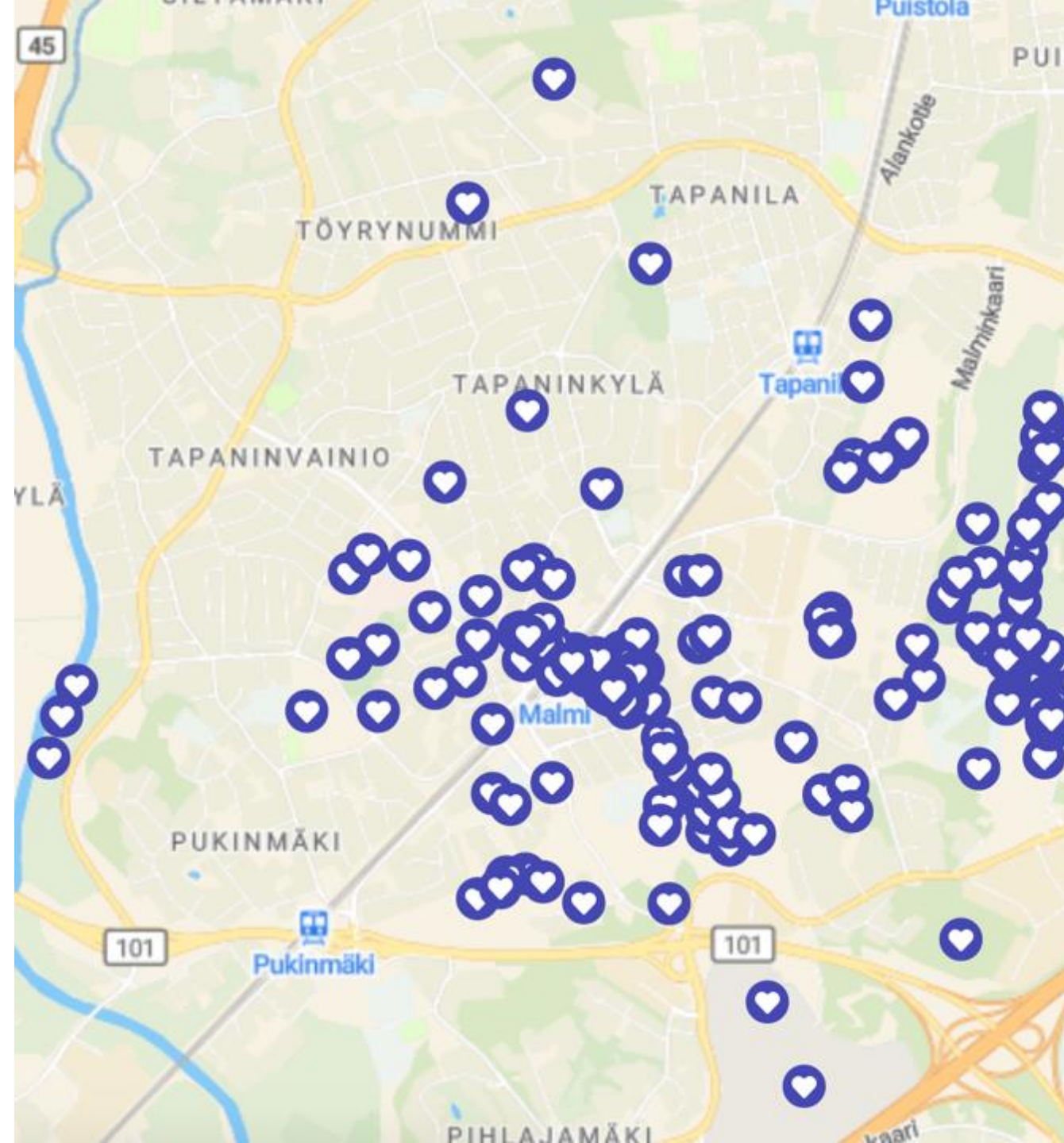
5. **Swimming hall and gyms**

Malmi Swimming Hall, appreciated for its warm atmosphere and aqua jogging pool.

6. **Services and shops**

Malmintori, shopping center, Citymarket, restaurants, and cafés. Good transport connections and local markets were also highlighted.

Most frequently mentioned open-ended responses, in order.



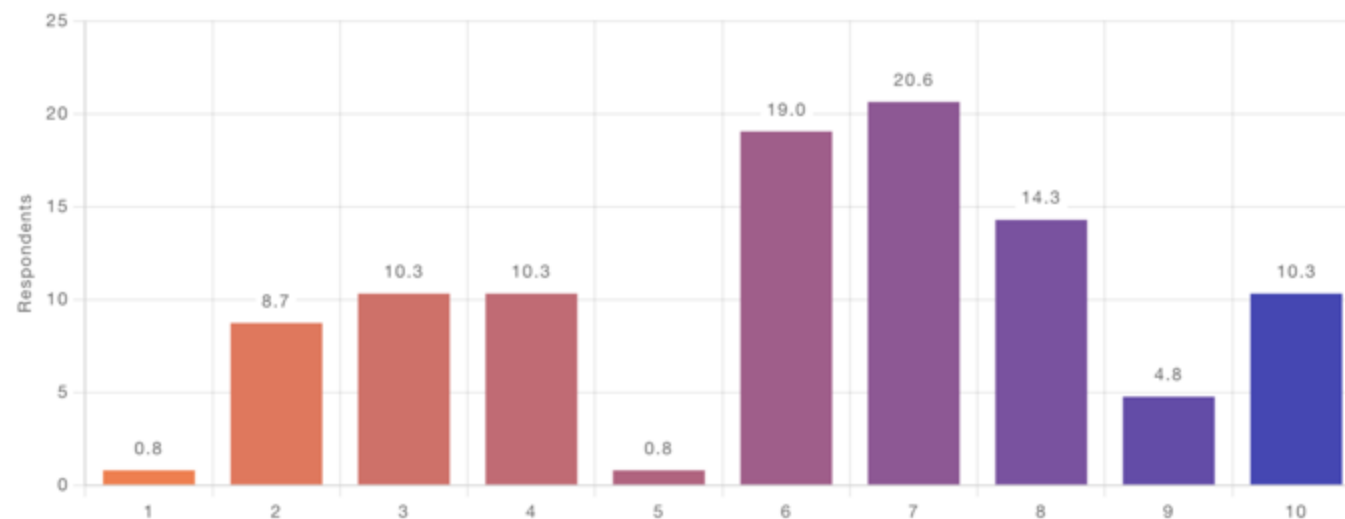


2. Community Spirit

Malmi is considered a fairly community-oriented area

Most respondents gave a rating of 6–8, with ratings of 6 (19%) and 7 (20.6%) standing out in particular. Only a few respondents perceived the area as very lacking in community spirit (ratings 1–2).

4.1 Kuinka yhteisölliseksi koet Malmin yleiset alueet?



Factors that build community spirit 3

1. Encounters and conversations

Spontaneous chats, familiar staff, shared tables, walking groups, and cafés create low-threshold opportunities for interaction.

2. Events and recreational activities

Cultural events, sports, aviation, and the offerings of the library and adult education center serve as strong unifying elements.

3. The aviation community at Malmi Airport

Several respondents describe the aviation community that has formed around the airport as uniquely close-knit, open, and warm-hearted.

4. Nature and shared spaces

Natural values, outdoor activities, and shared parks are seen as important — places where people “naturally meet.”

Themes compiled from open-ended responses.

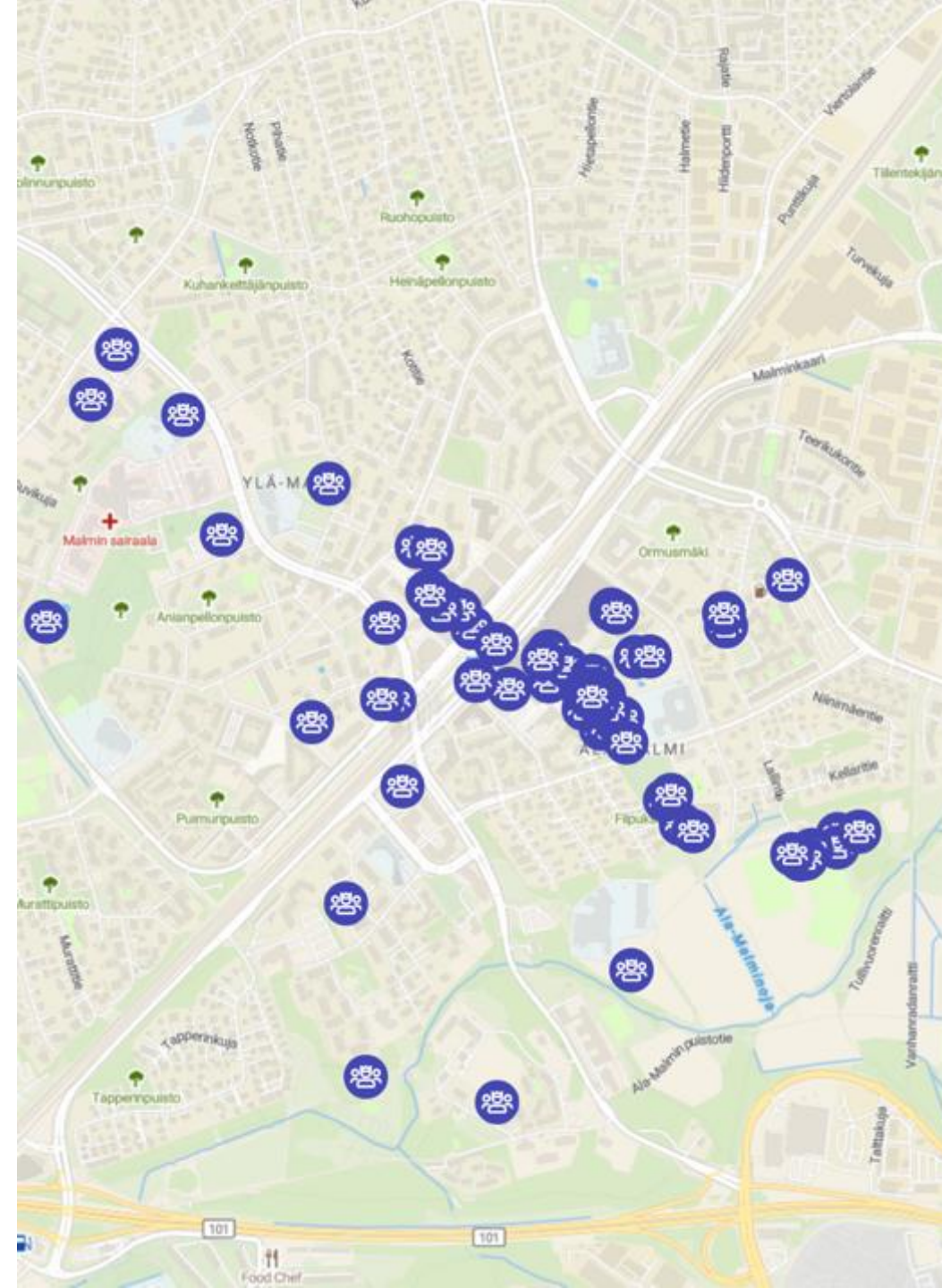
"At the Varustamo Waste & Feast restaurant, you can sit at a shared table and chat with other diners."

"Community spirit is visible at the Malmi Swimming Hall. The morning swimmers greet everyone with a good morning and exchange a few words."

"In the shopping center, people meet and see each other, and they talk with one another."

Places where community spirit is emphasized

- 1. Malmi Airport and its surroundings**
The heart of Malmi — brings together aviation enthusiasts, families, and nature lovers. A place for meeting people, walking, and organizing events.
- 2. Malmitalo**
A center for cultural offerings, concerts, the library, the adult education center, and events. A low-threshold meeting place for many, especially seniors.
- 3. Malmi Swimming Hall and sports facilities**
Morning swimmers greet each other and maintain friendly connections. Outdoor gyms, sports fields, and recreational parks support social interaction and togetherness.
- 4. Market squares and market events (especially Upper and Lower Malmi)**
Meeting places where events and flea markets are organized.
- 5. Playgrounds, daycare yards, and nearby areas**
Play an important role in building community among families with children. Everyday encounters and social networks are formed in these spaces.



3.

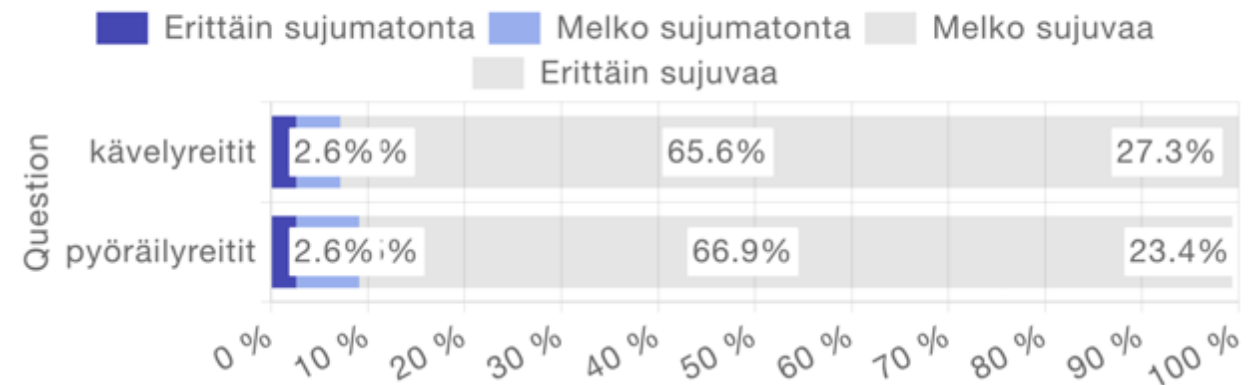
Mobility and Accessibility

Pleasantness of walking and cycling routes

- The majority of respondents find the routes fairly or very smooth, indicating that conditions for pedestrians and cyclists are generally good.
- Difficulties are most commonly reported among people aged 50–59 and 60–69 when walking, and among those aged 40–59 when cycling.

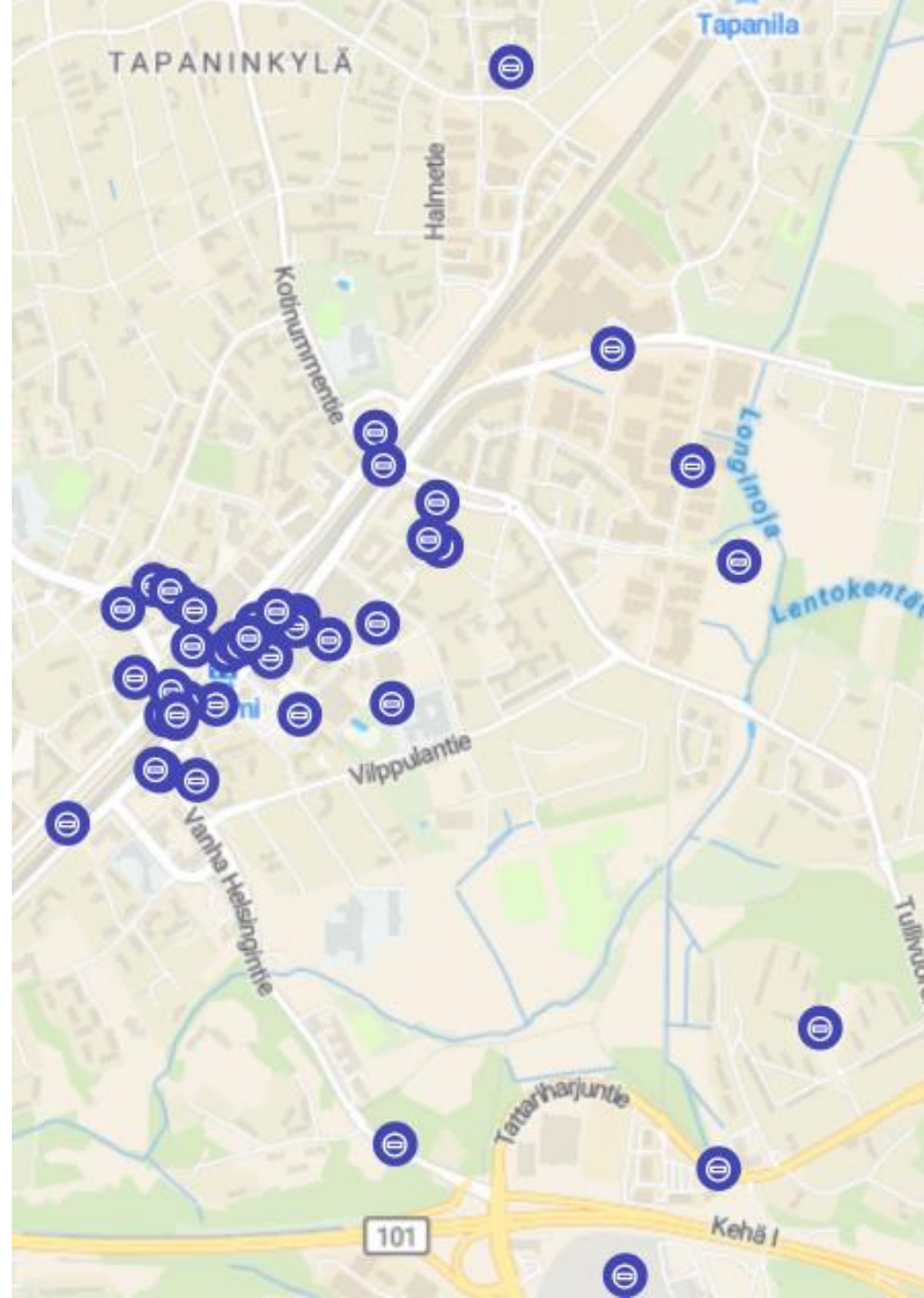
"There should be barrier-free access to the station. It's somehow really difficult or even impossible to get there with a rollator, wheelchair, or bicycle."

5.1 Kuinka sujuvaa ja miellyttävää on liikkuminen Malmin kevyen liikenteen reiteillä?



Challenging locations

- 1. The station area stands out as the most challenging location** — especially for those using rollators, wheelchairs, or bicycles. Elevators and escalators often do not work, and slippery or narrow pathways create safety hazards.
- 2. The tunnel's safety raises concerns** — groups of people cause a sense of insecurity in the station tunnel, making it an unpleasant or even frightening route to pass through.
- 3. The connection between Upper and Lower Malmi is** considered difficult to navigate — crossing the railway is particularly challenging, and movement between the market squares is unclear or physically demanding, especially by bicycle.



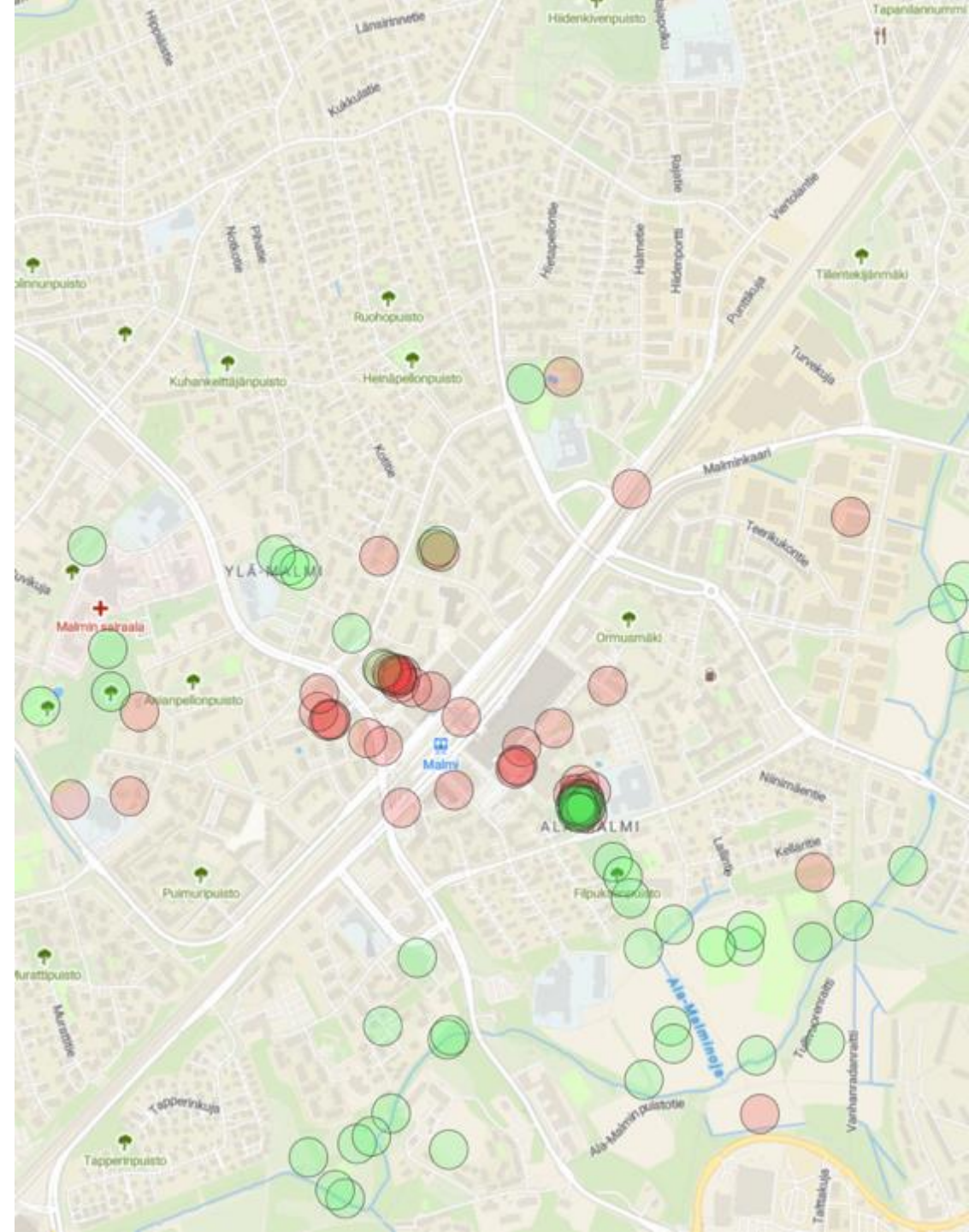


4.

Green and recreational areas

Pleasantness of green and recreational areas

- 1. Pleasant areas are concentrated on the outskirts.**
The airport, Longinoja, and Falkulla are perceived as attractive. Green areas in the center, especially the market squares and Ala-Malmi Park, are considered less pleasant.
- 2. Feelings of insecurity and disruptive behavior drive people away.** Substance use and “gangs” limit the possibilities for spending time, particularly in Malmi’s city center.
- 3. Wishes focus on clarity and cleanliness.**
Respondents call for a clearer distinction between calm and active areas, more seating, greenery, cafés, and more efficient cleaning.



Elements of a pleasant green and recreational area

1. Abundant nature

Diverse and even rare natural environments (meadows, Longinoja stream, animal and plant species).

Old trees, water elements, and open landscapes.

Peace of nature, animals, birdsong.

2. Tranquility and safety

No disruptive behavior or substance use.

A sense of safety, especially in the evenings.

A place where one can be with children without fear.

3. Opportunities for outdoor activities and recreation

Clear and well-maintained walking trails.

Ski tracks, cycling routes, playgrounds, and fitness equipment.

Benches and seating areas, including those with tables.

4. Aesthetics and cleanliness

Plantings, flowers, natural beauty.

Clean areas, free of litter or unclear objects.

Park-like maintenance and visual clarity.

5. Community and events

Events, markets, outdoor activities together.

A meeting place for people of all ages.

Opportunities to socialize or meet acquaintances.

"Ala-Malmi Square is bleak beyond belief — dirty, rundown, and surely intimidating to people coming from outside the area — even though it could, at its best, be a green and pleasant oasis that connects Malmitalo and the shopping center and serves as a natural meeting place."

"The outdoor trail around the airport: an incredible amount of birdsong, lush green nature."

"The Longinoja riverbanks are pleasant and calming throughout, both for walking and cycling. Longinoja is the lungs of Malmi."

"Beautiful field landscape, lovely cultivated plots, spaciousness and light, nice for walking."



5. Safety

Factors influencing safety



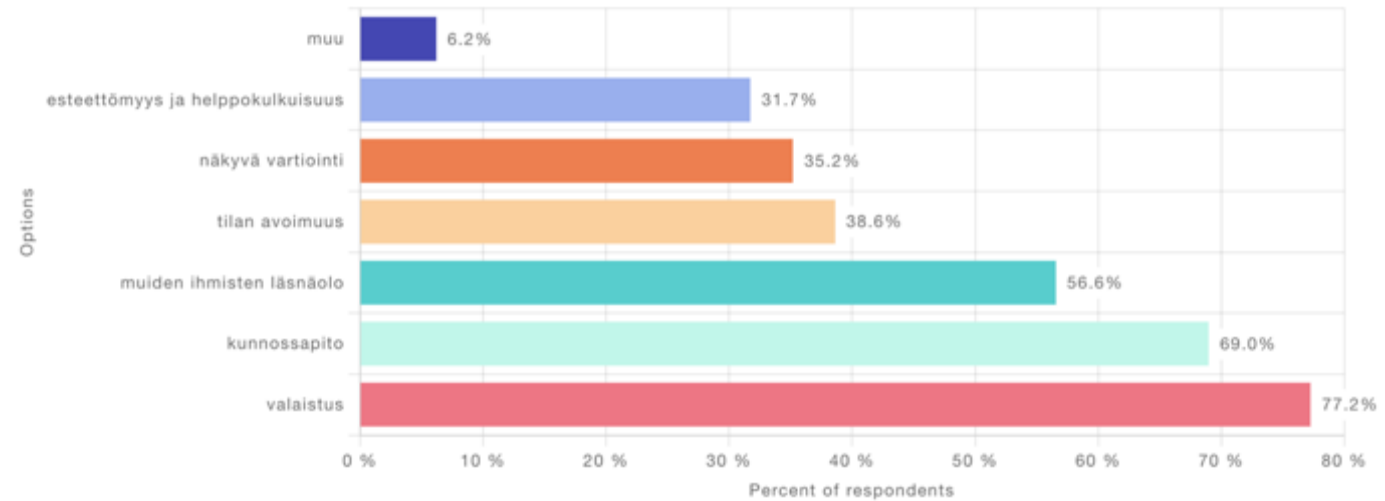
In the experience of safety, lighting and maintenance are particularly emphasized, but the social environment (people's presence, security personnel) and physical accessibility also play a significant role.

"There should be a children's playground at Upper Malmi Square (like in some shopping centers, for example on the roof of Redi). It would move the alcoholics and drug users elsewhere."

"Bring ordinary people and events to the places. A market officer who knows verbal judo."

"Both squares are hangout spots for adult substance abusers; ordinary passers-by just hurry past."

7.1 Mitkä tekijät vaikuttavat myönteisesti eniten turvallisuuden tunteeseen yleisillä alueilla liikkuessa?



Unsafe places on the map

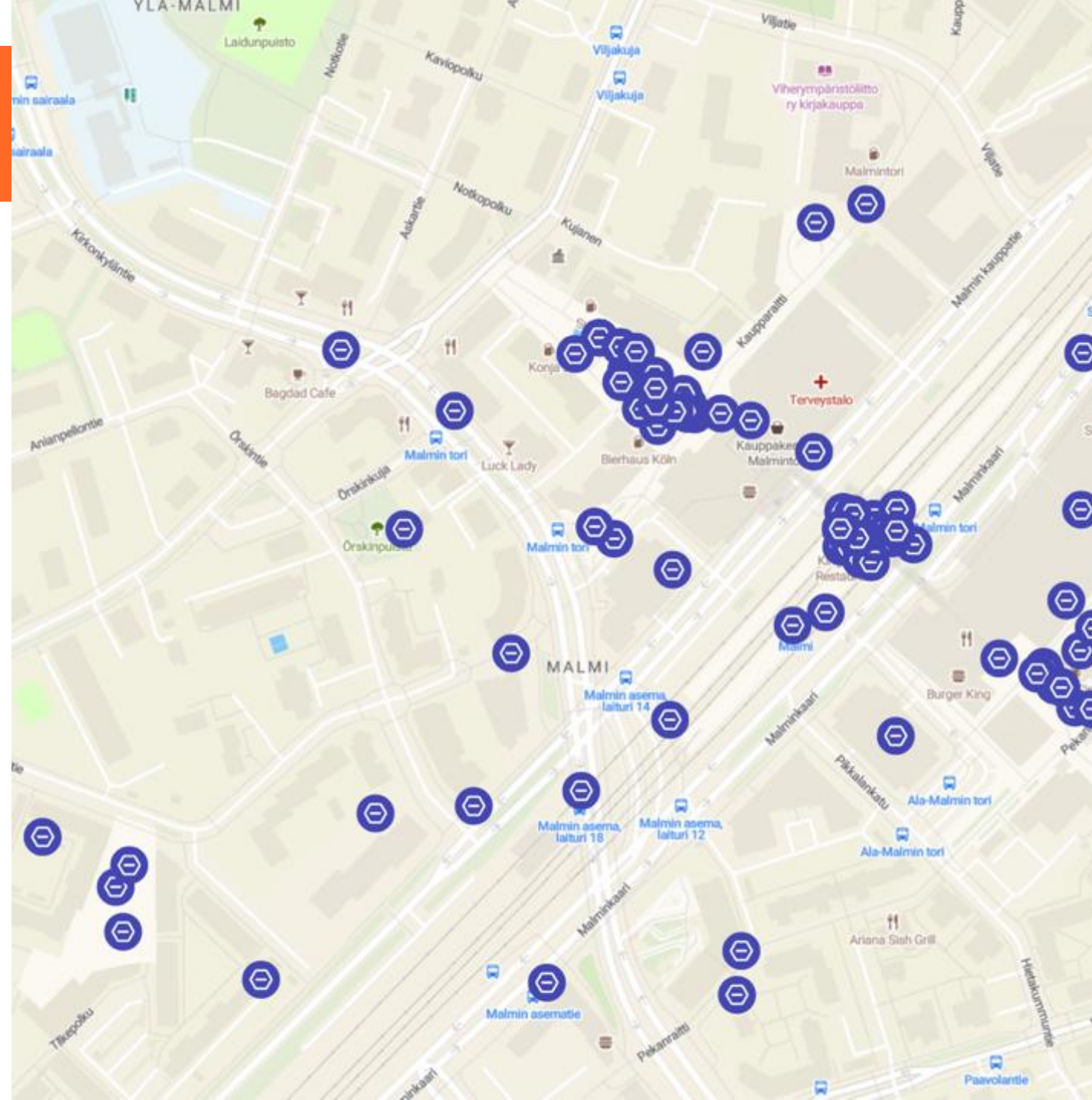
Concentration in Malmi city center

The areas most frequently perceived as unsafe are around Malmi Station, the Lower and Upper Malmi Squares, and Pekanraitti.

Recurring problems:

- Substance use and loitering youth groups
- Poor lighting and maintenance
- Run-down, littered environment
- Limited visible security presence and shortcomings in accessibility

Most frequently mentioned open-ended responses, in order.



6.

User profiles of public areas

Factors influencing safety

At the outset of the project, we had two main hypotheses regarding possible bases for profiling — that is, what connects and differentiates city residents in their wishes for the development of public areas:

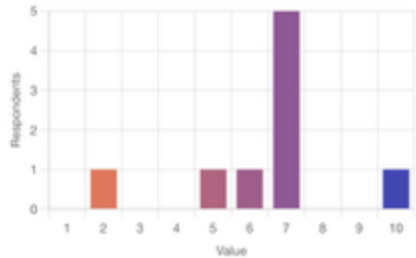
Hypothesis 1: Users of public areas differ from one another based on age, life stage, or other demographic factors.

Hypothesis 2: Users of public areas differ from one another on the level of values, attitudes, and motivations.

For this reason, the Maptionnaire survey explored both types of factors to identify the clearest distinguishing and unifying elements. The aim was to identify sufficiently strong connections so that the profiling framework could also be applied to interpret results in other city districts in the future.

We first examine (pp. 40–43) the ability of demographic variables to differentiate users of public areas. Next (pp. 44–52), we look at how value-, attitude-, and motivation-based variables distinguish between different user groups.

4.1 Kuinka yhteisölliseksi koet Malmin yleiset alueet



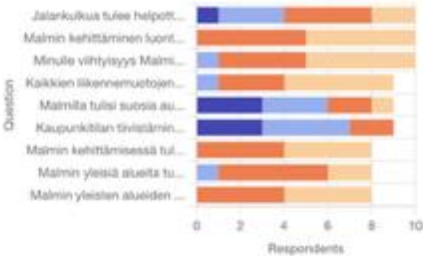
Submitted respondents: 7
Total respondents: 9

7.1 Mitkä tekijät vaikuttavat myönteisesti eniten tun



Submitted respondents: 8
Total respondents: 10

8.1 Kuinka samaa mieltä olet seuraavien väittämien



Submitted respondents: 8
Total respondents: 10

9.1 Millainen kaupunki olisi mielestäsi paras paikka



Submitted respondents: 8
Total respondents: 8

Young people, under 30 years old

N = 10 respondents

When examining the responses of young people, we can observe that they perceive Malmi as more community-oriented than average.

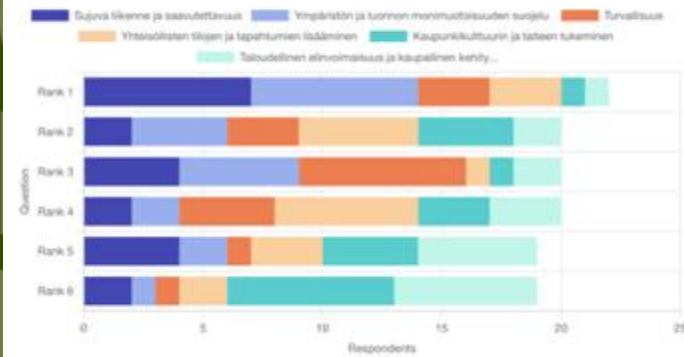
Their sense of safety would be strengthened, more often than among other respondents, by security presence and the maintenance of spaces (aesthetics were highlighted in open-ended responses).

The majority of young respondents found Malmi to be fairly community-minded.

Young people are, on average, more critical toward urban densification and the prioritization of car traffic. However, promoting walking at the expense of driving did not receive full support from them either.

The goals guiding city development (Section 9.1) are, on average, more strongly focused on natural values among young respondents.

8.2 Järjestä allaolevat tavoitteet yleisten alueiden kehittämisessä tärkeysjärjestykseen omasta näkökulmastasi (tartu vastausvaihtoehtoon ja raahaa ne tärkeysjärjestyksessä allaolevaan laatikkoon).



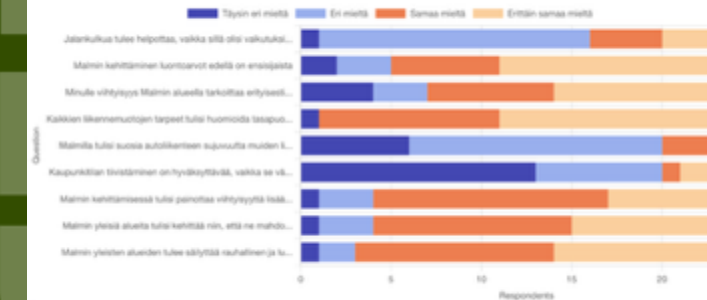
Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 22

Mitkä tekijät vaikuttavat myönteisesti eniten turv



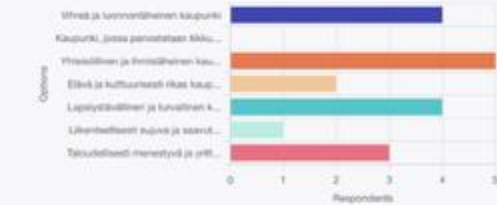
Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 24

8.1 Kuinka samaa mieltä olet seuraavien väittämien kanssa koskien yleisten alueiden kehittämistä?



Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 23

9.1 Millainen kaupunki olisi mielestäsi paras paikka asua? Valitse yksi (



Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 19

Elderly respondents, over 69 years old N = 38 respondents

The responses of elderly participants reveal the following: A sense of safety is supported most by the presence of other people, in addition to good lighting. Accessibility also stands out more strongly compared to the general responses.

Elderly respondents generally rated the walking routes and pedestrian pathways as fairly good, though a small minority found them somewhat or very inconvenient.

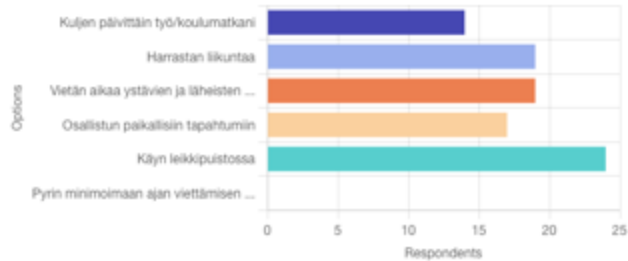
Their attitude toward promoting walking is almost the opposite of that of younger respondents, even though none of them reported using a private car on a daily basis.

In the open-ended responses, the best features of the Malmi area were identified as the available services, such as shops.

Among the city's development goals, "a communal and human-centered city" was emphasized significantly more by this group compared to others.

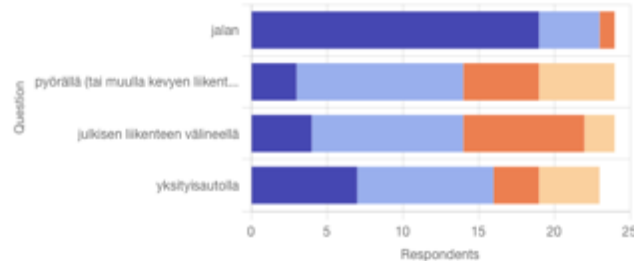
For the elderly, community-oriented and favorite places were concentrated largely in the same areas: Malmi city center and the airport area.

2.2 Kerro, miten vietät aikaa Malmilla? (valitse kaikki vaihtoehdot, jotka so



Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 24

2.1 Kuinka usein arvioit liikkuvasi Malmilla?



Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 24

9.1 Millainen kaupunki olisi mielestäsi paras paika



Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 19

Playground users*

N = 24 respondents

**Includes an assumption about a specific demographic.*

Among the respondents who reported visiting playgrounds in Malmi, other forms of spending time in the area were also at a high level (indicating that they likely spend much of their daily life there).

This group moves around Malmi mostly on foot almost daily, and uses other modes of transport weekly.

In terms of city development goals, child-friendliness and safety are emphasized the most. The second most important aspect — also the top one among other respondents — is greenery and proximity to nature. (→ It is worth noting, however, that child-friendliness was not the top priority for all members of this group.)

This group's experience of safety aligns with the general trend.

Their assessment of walking routes and pedestrian pathways was mostly fairly good, though a small minority rated them as somewhat or very poor.

In the statement questions (Section 8.1), responses followed the general pattern.

Summary: The ability of demographic variables to connect and differentiate respondents is weak.

Demographic factors, such as age, proved to be poor indicators for explaining specific behaviors and needs of city residents. Clear patterns or differences related to age, for example, were not found—or were not unique to any single demographic group. For instance, the same needs were often emphasized by both families with children and elderly people.

Thus, demographic factors alone explain poorly the needs of residents regarding the development of public areas, and are therefore not a sufficient basis for profiling in situations where the goal is to understand, explain, or potentially anticipate citizens' needs.

However, demographic factors and life situations can influence which public areas people use and how they use them (e.g., families with children have more experience of playgrounds). Therefore, it is important that research reaches people in a variety of life situations. This ensures that we receive diverse feedback about all areas in Malmi that are considered important or in need of development.

Nevertheless, it does not appear that certain priorities or goals automatically follow from demographic factors. People in different life stages may still want and value different things when it comes to developing public areas. For example, respondents over 69 years old identified services as the most important feature in the Malmi area, but their needs in public spaces were largely similar to those of other segments.

It is also worth noting that the most important priorities are shared by all residents.

Starting points for value- and motivation-based attitude and profiling

When examining existing research and source material on the different kinds of values and motivations associated with the development of public areas and urban development more broadly, we identified various motivational factors that we wanted to study in greater detail.

These motivational factors encapsulate different perspectives or priorities in relation to urban development.

Values and motivational factors were explored in the survey through, among others, the questions shown alongside — of which question (9.1) was used as the main analytical “lens” in the following section.

Question 8.2 is also a so-called “profiling” question. However, there is currently a technical issue in the Maptionnaire tool that prevents this question from being used as a filtering variable. Based on a close review of the Excel data, it nevertheless appears that the results regarding the segments’ needs would not significantly change even if the data were filtered using this question.

9.1 Millainen kaupunki olisi mielestäsi paras paikka asua? Valitse yksi (1) itsellesi kaikkein tärkein kohta.

- ☐ Vihreä ja luonnonläheinen kaupunki
- ☐ Kaupunki, jossa panostetaan liikkumiseen ja hyvinvointiin
- ☐ Yhteisöllinen ja ihmisläheinen kaupunki
- ☐ Elävä ja kulttuurisesti rikas kaupunki
- ☐ Lapsiystävällinen ja turvallinen kaupunki
- ☐ Liikenteellisesti sujuva ja saavutettava kaupunki
- ☐ Taloudellisesti menestyvä ja yrittäjyyttä tukeva kaupunki

8.2 Järjestä allaolevat tavoitteet yleisten alueiden kehittämisessä tärkeysjärjestykseen omasta näkökulmastasi (tartu vastausvaihtoehtoon ja raahaa ne tärkeysjärjestyksessä allaolevaan laatikkoon).

1. ...
 2. ...
 3. ...

|| Sujuva liikenne ja saavutettavuus

|| Ympäristön ja luonnon monimuotoisuuden suojelu

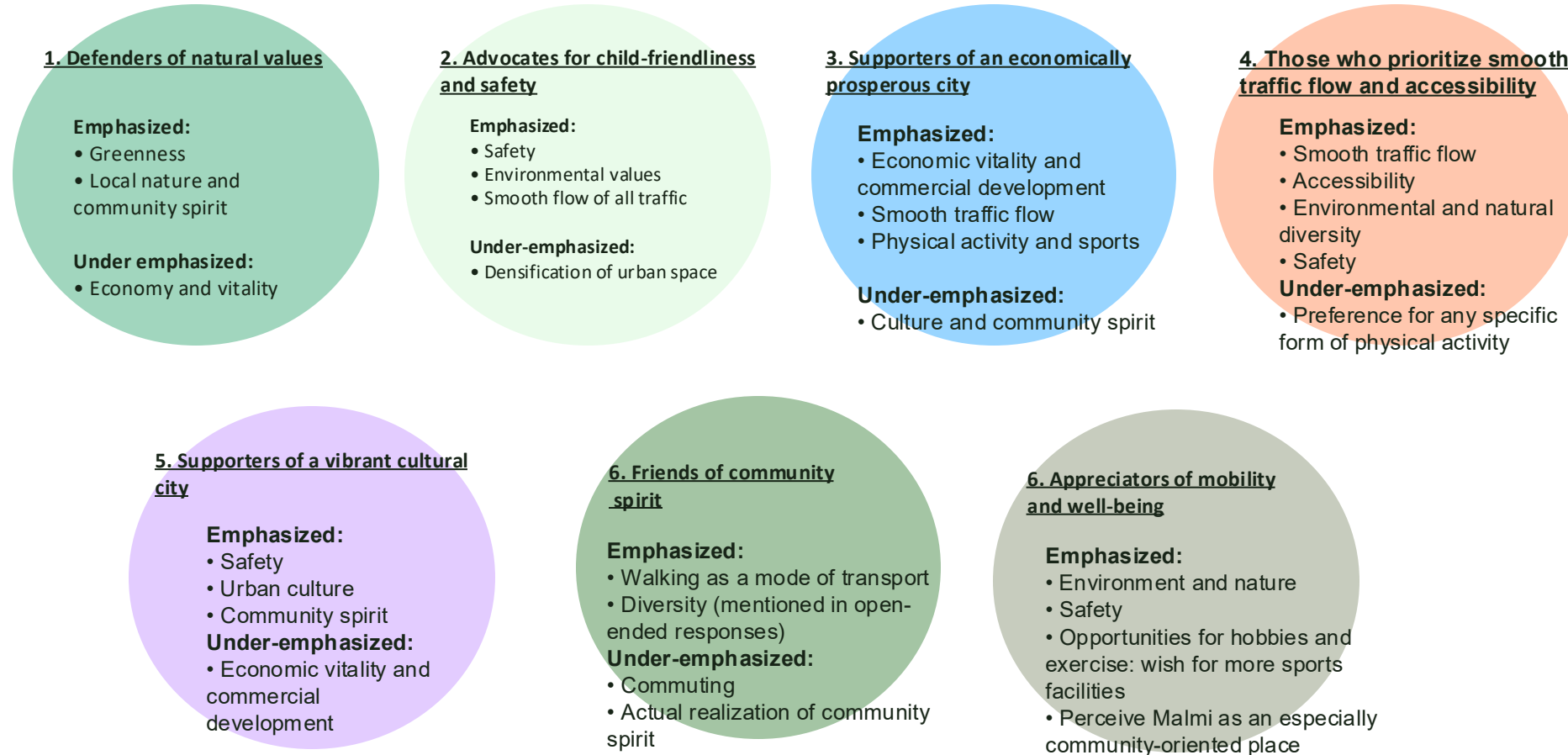
|| Turvallisuus

|| Yhteisöllisten tilojen ja tapahtumien lisääminen

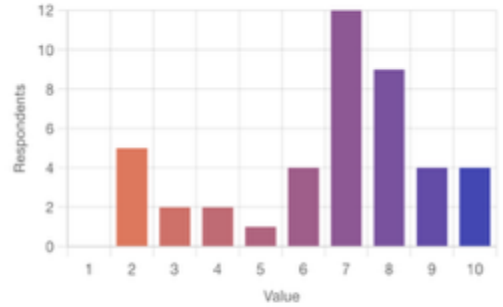
|| Kaupunkikulttuurin ja taiteen tukeminen

|| Taloudellinen elinvoimaisuus ja kaupallinen kehitys

We examined the following value-, attitude-, and motivation-based emphases



4.1 Kuinka yhteisölliseksi koet Malmin yleiset alueet



Submitted respondents: 43
Total respondents: 43

1. Defenders of natural values

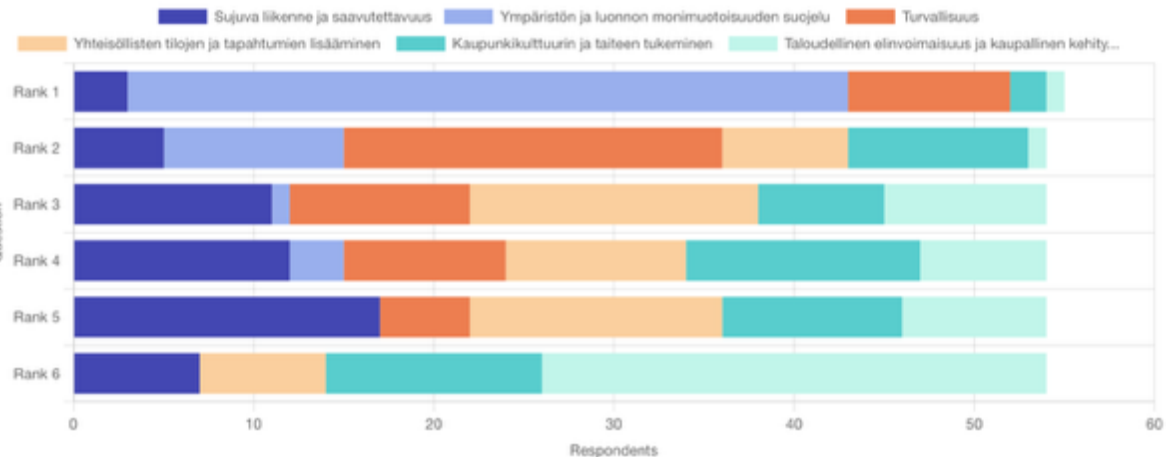
N = 54 respondents

A clear majority of respondents felt that a “green and nature-oriented city” would be the best place to live. This group included people of all ages, though slightly more young respondents compared to the overall sample. The group’s daily activities (Section 1.3), ways of spending time in Malmi (2.2), and modes of transport (2.1) did not differ from the overall respondent profile.

Members of this group perceived Malmi as significantly more community-oriented than respondents in other groups.

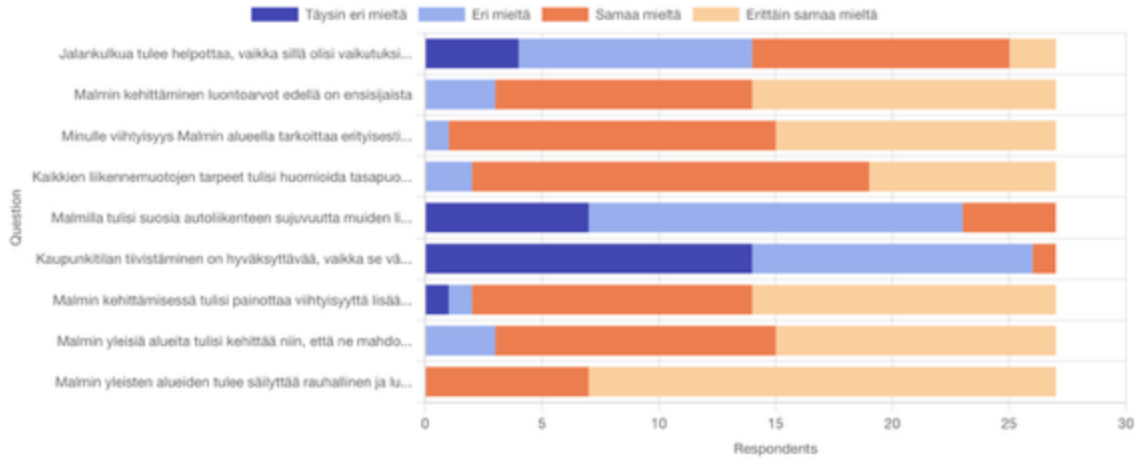
Within this group, the protection of the environment and natural diversity was clearly seen as the most important goal for the development of public areas, followed by safety. This group did not emphasize economic vitality and commercial development as goals, nor did they prioritize traffic flow as much as the overall respondent pool.

8.2 Järjestä allaolevat tavoitteet yleisten alueiden kehittämisessä tärkeysjärjestykseen omasta näkökulmastasi (tartu vastausvaihtoehtoon ja raahaa ne tärkeysjärjestyksessä allaolevaan laatikkoon).



Submitted respondents: 54
Total respondents: 54

8.1 Kuinka samaa mieltä olet seuraavien väittämien kanssa koskien yleisten alueiden kehittämistä?



Submitted respondents: 27
Total respondents: 27

2. Advocates for child-friendliness and safety N = 27 respondents

In this group, respondents aged 40–49 were overrepresented, while those aged 50–59 and under 20 were somewhat underrepresented compared to the average.

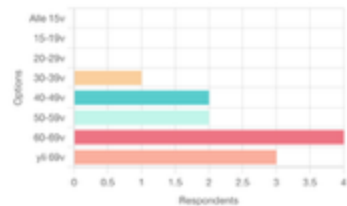
A smaller proportion of this group reported making daily work trips within Malmi, whereas leisure activities (exercise, friends, events, playgrounds) were emphasized.

A significantly higher share than average wished for more recreational opportunities in Malmi. This group perceived the Malmi area as fairly community-oriented, although responses varied widely, and no one gave the highest ratings (9–10).

The most important priorities for city development in this group were safety, the environment, and smooth traffic and accessibility — consistent with the priorities of the overall respondent population. This group opposed the densification of urban space at the expense of green areas, and the emphasis on natural values in development received strong support. Security presence was slightly more favored than average as a factor that could improve the sense of safety.



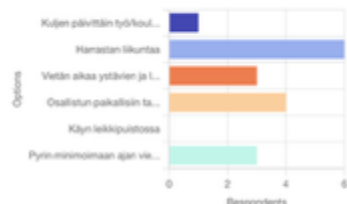
1.1 Mihin seuraavista ikäryhmistä kuulut?



Submitted respondents: 12

Total respondents: 12

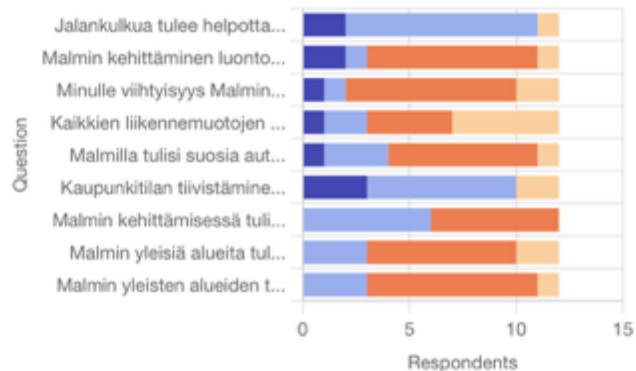
2.2 Kerro, miten vietät aikaa Malmilla? (valitse kaikki)



Submitted respondents: 11

Total respondents: 11

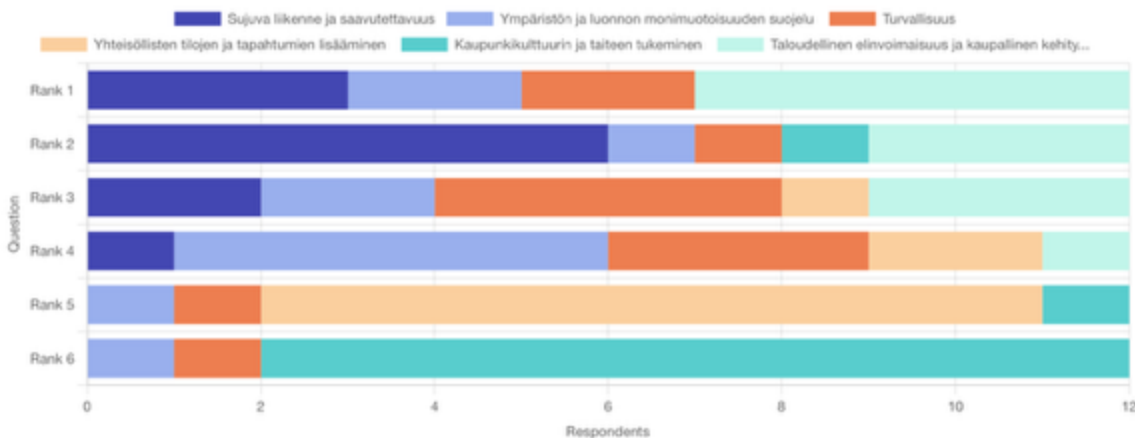
8.1 Kuinka samaa mieltä olet seuraavien väittämien



Submitted respondents: 12

Total respondents: 12

8.2 Järjestä allaolevat tavoitteet yleisten alueiden kehittämisessä tärkeysjärjestykseen omasta näkökulmastasi (tartu vastausvaihtoehtoon ja raahaa ne tärkeysjärjestyksessä allaolevaan laatikkoon).



Submitted respondents: 12

Total respondents: 12

3. Supporters of an economically prosperous city

N = 12 respondents

This group was clearly dominated by middle-aged and older respondents (none under 30), and it included slightly more employed people than retirees. Walking and private car use were the most common ways of getting around Malmi for this group, while light traffic modes (e.g., cycling) were used rarely. Engagement in physical activity in Malmi stood out clearly among these respondents, whereas only one person in the group reported making daily work trips within the area. Slightly more than half of the group wished for more opportunities for recreational activities.

The responses highlighted “hard values” — or at least expressions suggesting them:

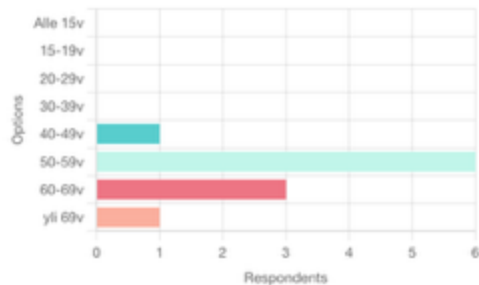
“Increasing jobs in the area so that the idle can get a grip on life — or at least housing prices rise enough that they move elsewhere.”

“The war is already lost; stay away from Malmi.”

This group had a more positive attitude toward promoting car use compared to others, while they did not wish to make walking easier at the expense of other traffic. Additionally, traffic flow as a goal was more important to them than to other groups.

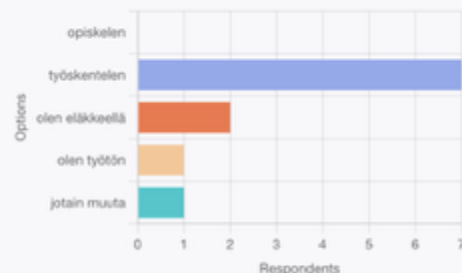
This group emphasized the airport as a distinctive strength of the area. In their goals (8.2), the promotion of culture and community spirit ranked among the lowest priorities. Their sense of community was mixed.

1.1 Mihin seuraavista ikäryhmistä kuulut?



Submitted respondents: 11
Total respondents: 11

1.3 Mihin pääasiassa keskityt päivittäisessä elämäs?



Submitted respondents: 11
Total respondents: 11

4. Those who prioritize smooth traffic flow and accessibility

N = 11 respondents

This group was clearly weighted toward people over middle age.

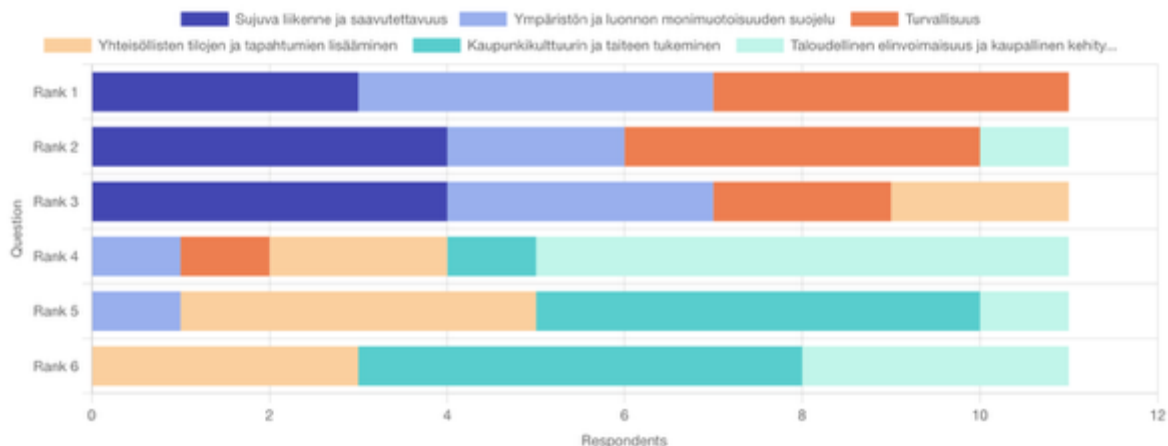
However, the majority of respondents were still in working life. In this group, the **top three goals** for the development of public areas (Question 8.2) were unanimously **smooth traffic flow and accessibility**, **environmental and natural diversity**, and **safety**.

Respondents in this group wished for a **balance between different modes of transport**, meaning that neither driving nor walking should be promoted at the expense of the other. They also expressed a desire (in line with overall responses) to **preserve the area's tranquility and natural character**, and did not support urban densification.

Regarding community spirit, the experiences of this group varied widely, with ratings distributed fairly evenly between 3 and 10.

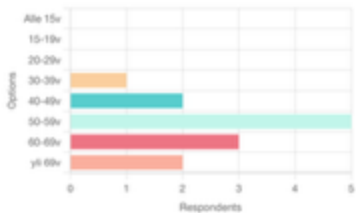
This group did not perceive **the presence of other people** or **the accessibility of spaces** as factors contributing to safety as frequently as other respondents did.

8.2 Järjestä allaolevat tavoitteet yleisten alueiden kehittämisessä tärkeysjärjestykseen omasta näkökulmastasi (tartu vastausvaihtoehtoon ja raahaa ne tärkeysjärjestyksessä allaolevaan laatikkoon).

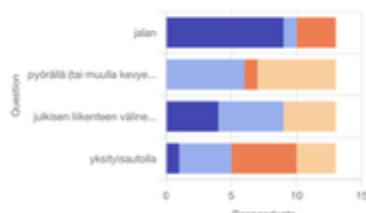


Submitted respondents: 11
Total respondents: 11

1.1 Mihin seuraavista ikäryhmistä kuulut?



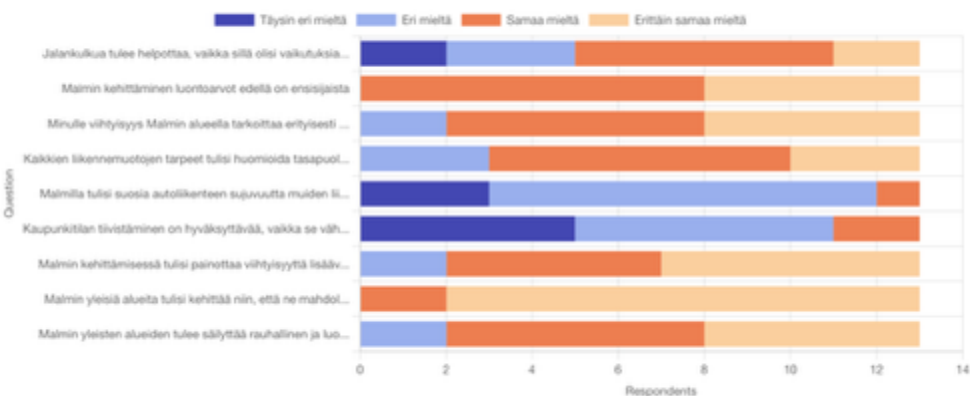
2.1 Kuinka usein arvioit liikkuvasi Malmilla?



2.2 Kerro, miten vietät aikaa Malmilla? (valitse kaikk

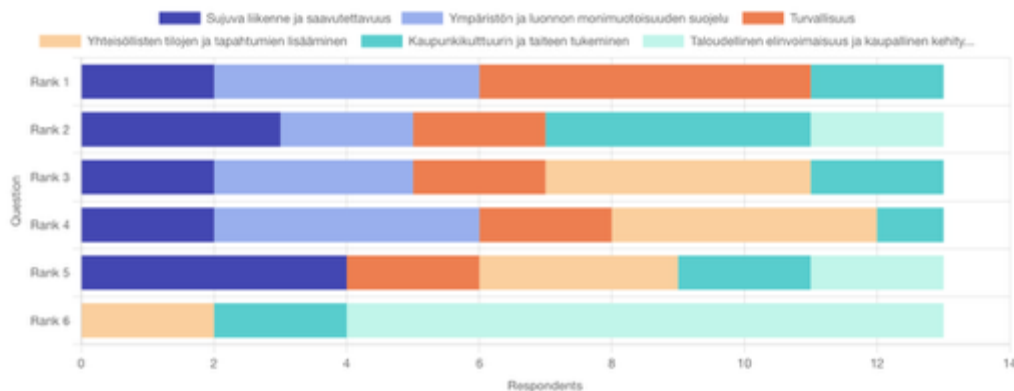


8.1 Kuinka samaa mieltä olet seuraavien väittämien kanssa koskien yleisten alueiden kehittämistä?



Submitted respondents: 13
Total respondents: 13

8.2 Järjestä allaolevat tavoitteet yleisten alueiden kehittämisessä tärkeysjärjestykseen omasta näkökulmastasi (tartu vastausvaihtoehtoon ja raahaa ne tärkeysjärjestyksessä allaolevaan laatikkoon).



Submitted respondents: 13
Total respondents: 13

5. Supporters of a vibrant cultural city

N = 13 respondents

This group is characterized by respondents aged 50–59 and those who are employed. Their wishes regarding recreational opportunities were divided. In this group, people move around Malmi particularly actively on foot and by public transport. Less than half of this group commute daily within Malmi, but participation in local events stands out clearly compared to other groups.

As important places, members of this group especially named Malmitalo as well as Malmi's cultural events and offerings. The open-ended responses included many mentions of the area's good services.

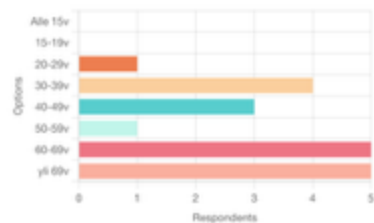
In question (8.1), there was slightly stronger support for the idea that public areas should be developed with an emphasis on comfort and urban culture.

Safety was highlighted as the number one priority in city development, but urban culture and community spirit ranked higher than in any other group.



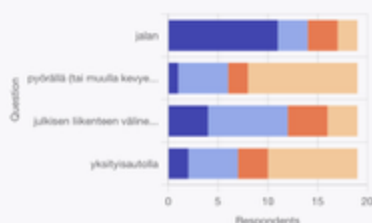
Funded by
the European Union

1.1 Mihin seuraavista ikäryhmistä kuulut?



Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 19

2.1 Kuinka usein arvioit liikkuvasi Malmilla?



Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 19

2.2 Kerro, miten vietät aikaa Malmilla? (valitse kaikk



Submitted respondents: 19
Total respondents: 19

6. Friends of community spirit

N = 19 respondents

This group includes, on average, younger respondents, although there are also several older participants.

They move around Malmi mainly on foot, but often also use public transport.

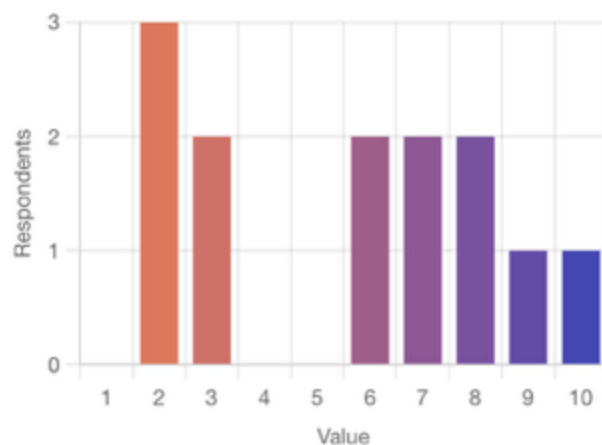
In open-ended responses, people expressed appreciation for the diversity of residents living in Malmi.

In comments related to improving safety, the presence and patrolling of the police was emphasized as a key wish.

Only about one-third of this group commutes daily within Malmi, but leisure activities (exercise, meeting friends, and participating in local events) were highlighted more strongly than among respondents overall.

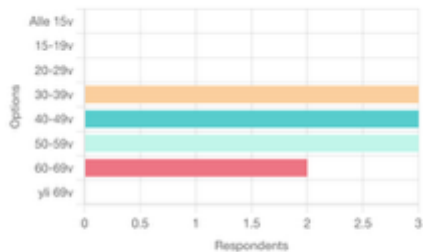
Although this group believes that a communal and human-centered city would be the best kind of place to live, their experiences of community spirit in Malmi were mixed — meaning that some feel this value has not yet been fully realized in the area.

4.1 Kuinka yhteisölliseksi koet Malmin yleis



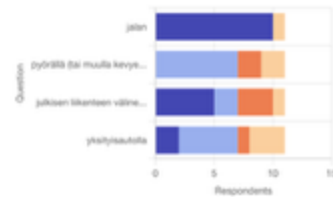
Submitted respondents: 13
Total respondents: 13

1.1 Mihin seuraavista ikäryhmistä kuulut?



Submitted respondents: 11
Total respondents: 11

2.1 Kuinka usein arvioit liikkuvasi Malmilla?



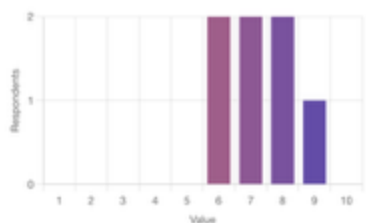
Submitted respondents: 11
Total respondents: 11

2.2 Kerro, miten vietät aikaa Malmilla? (valitse kaikk

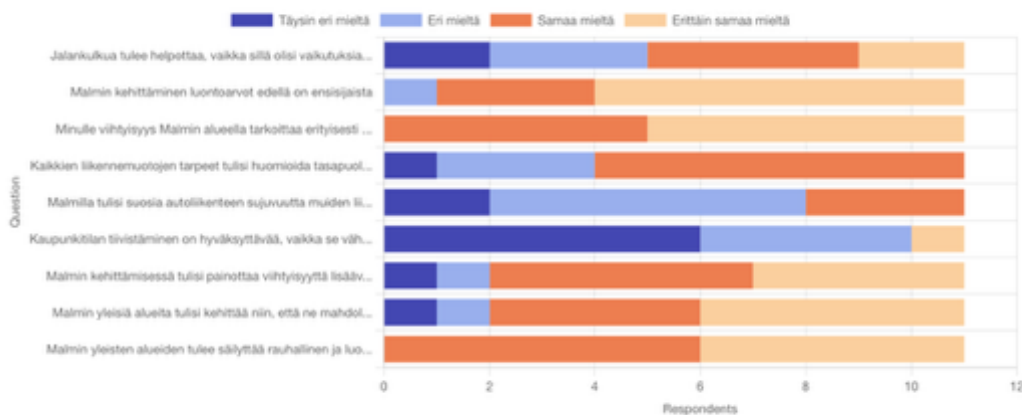


Submitted respondents: 11
Total respondents: 11

4.1 Kuinka yhteisölliseksi koet Malmi yleiset alueet



8.1 Kuinka samaa mieltä olet seuraavien väittämien kanssa koskien yleisten alueiden kehittämistä?



Submitted respondents: 11
Total respondents: 11

7. Appreciators of mobility and well-being

N = 11 respondents

This group included respondents evenly distributed across the 30–70 age range, and the majority spent their days working. Almost all members of this group walk daily in Malmi, and in addition, they use light modes of transport weekly. Public transport is also actively used by this group.

Most of them commute daily within Malmi. In addition, many engage in physical activities in the area, participate in events, and spend time with friends and family.

Nearly all respondents in this group (9 out of 11) wished for more opportunities for recreational activities in Malmi.

This group strongly emphasized the experience of Malmi as a community-oriented area.

All respondents in this group agreed with the following statements:

“Comfort in Malmi is primarily defined by proximity to nature and opportunities to move around in green areas.”

“The public areas of Malmi should maintain their peaceful and nature-oriented character.”

Summary: Differences between the value-, attitude-, and motivation-based groups were observable, but not particularly significant.

- Natural values appeared to be a widely shared and important value among nearly all respondents. Likewise, experiences of insecurity and suggested ways to improve safety did not differ greatly between the groups.
- From the analysis of map annotations, the following observations were made:
- Areas marked as difficult (in terms of accessibility) and unsafe were often located close to each other, regardless of group.
- Community-oriented places were found in roughly the same locations across groups, showing little variation.
- In contrast, favorite places showed more variation between groups — though some commonalities existed, such as the airport area and the service-rich central areas. For example, those with a stronger nature orientation emphasized broader green areas, while those focused on transportation favored the airport.
- Among respondents emphasizing economic vitality, favorite places included Tapanila; for cultural-oriented respondents, Fallkulla and Longinoja Park stood out.
- For those emphasizing community spirit, several favorite places were located in Lower Malmi (Ala-Malmi).

Ideas for further development of value-, attitude-, and motivation-based profiling:

- Supporters of economic vitality and traffic flow could potentially form one more distinct group. Their responses reflected slightly more conservative values, as community and culture were not emphasized as strongly as by others. This group also tended to defend the role of driving in urban development.
- A second possible cluster could consist of supporters of community spirit and a vibrant urban culture. Their responses emphasized functional services, encounters, and the richness of diversity in the city.
- A third separate cluster might include the nature-oriented respondents. However, this group should be understood in more depth, as it is large. It would be valuable to explore whether, for example, active outdoor enthusiasts form a distinct subgroup compared to those who value nature as an intrinsic good, focusing on naturalness and tranquility.

Summary of public space user profiling

Our key finding was that city residents and their wishes are not significantly differentiated by

- a) value- and motivation-based factors, or
- b) differences related to life situation or life stage.

On this basis, our conclusion is that it is more fruitful to focus not on identifying what kinds of people live in each area, but rather what kinds of issues engage and concern people in the area. In these respects, residents' views appear largely aligned.

In this analysis, the most important aspect is to identify, for example:

Places of natural value that residents consider important or “worth protecting”

Key outdoor and recreational areas

Locations perceived as unsafe or dangerous that residents would like to see improved

Areas with poor accessibility

Places that support community spirit and local culture

Locations and actions that enhance aesthetic values and the area's local identity

→ Especially the open-ended responses in the survey can provide valuable insights on these themes to inform the development of public areas.

3. The needs and inclusion of hard-to-reach and vulnerable groups

By going out into Malmi and interviewing representatives of civic organizations as well as city experts, we were able to map the needs of those residents whom the survey alone did not reach.

The organizations' and the City of Helsinki experts' understanding of their target groups helped to interpret what the survey responses might mean in practice and what kinds of experiences or needs lie behind them.

Involving people in vulnerable positions

One of the project's objectives was to explore how the opportunities of so-called disadvantaged groups to influence the development of their immediate surroundings and public spaces could be improved.

A key aspect of this is ensuring their voices are heard and that they are genuinely included in the process.

- In this context, disadvantaged groups include children and young people, due to their limited opportunities to participate; people with immigrant backgrounds, due to possible language and cultural barriers; as well as people with substance abuse issues and those without permanent housing.
- These groups were, as expected, underrepresented in the Maptionnaire survey conducted as part of the project. Therefore, their inclusion was carried out through fieldwork in the Malmi area — by filling out the survey form together with them, conducting joint observations with outreach social work, and interviewing them at the library, on the street, and at the youth centre.
- Representatives of organizations and City of Helsinki employees were also interviewed about the everyday realities and needs of these target groups in the Malmi area. Participants included a youth worker, outreach social workers, a participation and impact specialist, and an expert from an immigrant advocacy organization.

Expert Interview

Participants:

Kirsti Kallansalo, Chair of the Malmi Network and *Stadiluotsi* (City Guide),
Nouran El Amara from the Finnish Refugee Council's *Sawian* project,
Elja Kaartinen from *outreach social work*.

Format: Structured thematic interview

Duration: 75 minutes

Fieldwork and Observation

Participation in **outreach local work** in public areas of Malmi; total **residents reached: N=8**

Quick interviews with young people at Malmitalo, the library, and Ala-Malmi Square; **N=9 (lower secondary school-aged)**

Group discussion with children and young people at the Malmi youth centre; **N=8 (primary school-aged)**

Who are the people in vulnerable situations in this project?



Based on the project's objectives and previous phases, we identified the following groups as those that have been difficult to reach through survey methods and who potentially do not have their voices heard.

People with substance abuse issues and those possibly without permanent housing

People who use substances are often left out of research, as they may live on the margins of society without a permanent address or digital access. Additionally, there is often stigma associated with them, which makes it difficult to establish trusting interaction — and reaching them requires particular sensitivity and ethical consideration in the implementation of the study.

City residents with an immigrant background

City residents with an immigrant background are in a vulnerable position, as linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic barriers may weaken their opportunities to participate equally in society.

Young city residents

Children and young people are in a vulnerable position because their living conditions, autonomy, and communication skills are often limited. In addition, the processing of their personal data is subject to the strictest protection requirements under the GDPR, which makes them a particularly hard-to-reach group that requires special protection in research.

The needs of people with substance abuse issues and those possibly without permanent housing are, in terms of themes, similar to the needs of other city residents

People with substance abuse issues and those possibly without permanent housing

These groups are frequent users of public spaces, spending a significant part of their day there. It is noteworthy that their wishes are, at a general level, similar to those of other city residents: safety, comfort, and a sense of community are emphasized. They value beautiful and pleasant public spaces where they can feel at ease and welcome.

A sense of **local pride and belonging** is also important to them — spaces that are appreciated encourage people to take care of their surroundings. **Safety** is a central concern for this group and poses challenges for urban planning. There is a clear conflict of interest between different groups of city residents: while others may perceive people who use substances as a potential safety risk, these individuals actually benefit from the presence and supervision of other residents. **Social oversight** increases their sense of safety, whereas being pushed to the margins of the city exposes them to **crime and disturbances**.

Representatives of this group acknowledge and express that they do not wish to be “in the way” or take up others’ space. Their wish is simply to have **more places where they can spend time**, so that there would also be a place for them to belong.

Tensions sometimes arise with other groups who also spend a lot of time in public spaces, such as young people. These could be mitigated through **spatial solutions** that support coexistence and interaction between different groups.

The needs of people with substance abuse issues and those possibly without permanent housing are, in terms of themes, similar to the needs of other city residents

Challenges and needs

- There are not enough safe, accessible, and communal spaces for people with substance abuse issues and those experiencing homelessness.
- People who use substances face a great deal of prejudice and discrimination, and they themselves may also hold prejudices against other groups, such as young people with immigrant backgrounds.
- Monofunctional rest areas — for example, single benches placed in open spaces — do not encourage shared use and can also discriminate against homeless people through design choices.
- The lack and poor condition of hygiene facilities limit the use of public spaces and undermine the sense of safety. There is a tension between safety and substance use: balancing openness and control requires carefully considered solutions.

Concrete wishes and development suggestions

- Elements that enhance comfort and pleasantness, such as comfortable wooden benches, flower plantings, and water features.
- Places where one can feel welcome and not in anyone's way — for example, areas with clearly defined seating groups arranged to enable being together in smaller groups.
- Bright yet sheltered structures, such as canopies and shaded areas that provide protection from rain and sun, would improve comfort and safety, especially in marketplace areas.

The needs of city residents with an immigrant background

Concrete wishes and development suggestions

- The needs of city residents with an immigrant background were identified based on the Maptionnaire survey, interviews with NGO experts, and interviews with young people.
- The majority of the young people reached during the project appeared to have an immigrant background. However, it is important to note that their responses are discussed here primarily from the perspective of young city residents.
- For young people, street gangs raise more concern than substance use. However, problems do occur in encounters with people who use substances, partly due to racist attitudes.
- Young people with immigrant backgrounds expressed a need for public, communal spaces where they can spend time together. When suitable spaces are not provided or the environment is perceived as hostile toward youth, they tend to retreat to private homes. In such cases, the lack of community presence and social oversight can increase the risk of exposure to crime or harmful influences.
- At the same time, discriminatory control experienced in some public spaces — particularly among non-white youth — increases their fear of public spaces and their sense of constant surveillance.
Families with immigrant backgrounds also expressed a wish for public outdoor spaces that would allow them to better foster a sense of community.

The needs of city residents with an immigrant background

Challenges and needs

- Parks are popular places for families to spend time, but hygiene in them is often poor. Water points and toilets, where possible, are much desired.
- Due to safety concerns, there is a need for more wintertime lighting and for eliminating hidden or obscured areas.
- Calm yet open spaces are needed — places where people of different ages and backgrounds can meet safely.
- Multipurpose and easily accessible spaces should be placed at the center of neighbourhoods.

Concrete wishes and development suggestions

- Families with an immigrant background wish for more communal spaces, such as barbecue areas, dining groups, and possibly playful or game-like elements that encourage interaction between different groups.
- They also hope for calm yet open places where people of different ages and backgrounds can meet safely.
- They would like to see inspiration drawn from attractive examples elsewhere, such as Kupittaa Adventure Park or Pukinmäki Summer Theatre. What makes these places successful is their programming and guided encounters, which create a foundation for shared use. The spaces have been designed with these elements in mind.
- Malmi aviation field could, in the future, develop into a park-like and communal public space.
- For young people, the main wish was for so-called semi-private public spaces — that is, places where they can spend time with their own friends, yet still feel the security and liveliness that comes from the presence of others and the possibility of social connection.

For young people, insecurity in public spaces is an everyday reality

- Children and young people said they mainly move around the area on foot, but also by bicycle and scooter. Among public spaces, their favourite places included the Traktori playground (for the younger end of the age range, around 10 years old) and the Savelan area.
 - Younger, but especially older youth (13+) reported spending much of their time in other parts of eastern Helsinki, such as Itäkeskus, Oulunkylä, Puhos, and Tapanila. Older teens did not find Malmi interesting and felt there was little to do there.
 - Younger children, on the other hand, described Malmi as “a home,” a place with “a good school, good friends, and peace.” However, the younger the child, the less freedom of movement they experienced. Many said their movement was limited to a home–school–youth centre–Traktori playground route. Parents guide their children to move only within certain areas or specify places they are not allowed to go. Parents also wish that children and young people travel directly from one place to another without stopping along the way.
 - As users of public spaces, many young people primarily move from place to place, especially the younger ones. While there is a desire to spend time and hang out, it is also clear to them that certain places or areas are not suitable for that.
 - Some locations are avoided entirely or visited only when accompanied by an adult. Examples mentioned included Ylä- and Ala-Malmi Squares and the underpass at the train station.
- In discussions with children and young people, the theme of safety repeatedly emerged. In their accounts, mugging appeared as an almost everyday phenomenon — many had heard of incidents, and some mentioned cases where, for example, a snack had been snatched from their hand on the street.
- Insecurity was perceived as affecting all genders, and anyone could become a victim.
- Young people viewed youth gangs, such as the 7side gang associated with Malmi and others who admire gang culture, as a greater threat than people who use substances.

Young people wish for more opportunities for hobbies and places to hang out



Challenges and needs

- More safe outdoor spaces to spend time in
People who use substances have taken over public areas.
- More opportunities for hobbies.
- Safety when moving around outdoors is a challenge for young people — the main safety risk comes from other young people and gangs.

Concrete wishes and development suggestions

- More grouped seating areas are desired for parks and squares instead of individual benches.
- A proper artificial turf field (for playing soccer) was mentioned as a wish for the area.
- A green park was suggested for Ala-Malmi Square.

In summary:

We recommend utilizing both the direct participation of people in vulnerable situations and the expert knowledge that is readily available and provides a broad perspective on the phenomena.

Key themes in the inclusion of people in more vulnerable positions

- The resident groups share largely similar needs, but conflicts arise between the needs of substance users and other residents from a safety perspective.
- Social surveillance – meaning the presence of other people – is, however, perceived as making everyone feel safer.
- Other vulnerable groups perceive substance users as a safety threat, while for young people, the perceived threat is more related to youth gangs.
- Factors that increase comfort and pleasantness were commonly shared among all resident groups.
- Gathering and spending time together is an important and mutually shared need. There is a wish for more spaces that encourage staying and socializing.

What social problems can the design of public spaces aim to influence?

- **Maintenance and aesthetics of spaces.** A well-maintained environment — cleanliness, intact furniture, and proper upkeep — conveys a sense of care and supervision, which helps reduce feelings of insecurity.
- **Diverse use:** Spaces where people of different ages and backgrounds spend time (for example, parks with play areas, benches, and exercise equipment) tend to feel safer.
- **Ability to choose one's location and company:** Spaces that allow users to decide whether to be in view or slightly aside support a sense of control.

“Experiences of engaging vulnerable groups and recommendations for future actions (described in more detail in the appendices of this report):”

- Based on our experience, it is important to engage hard-to-reach and vulnerable target groups in their authentic environments and contexts.
- However, their inclusion requires resources, specific research expertise, and above all, an understanding of perspective and context in order to make the right kinds and levels of interpretations successfully.
- For this reason, we recommend that similar studies make use of both the City of Helsinki’s extensive internal expert network and the partner networks of research and expert organizations, so that project teams can gain a solid foundational understanding and support for their interpretations.
- This knowledge should then be deepened through fieldwork, observation, and direct interviews with representatives of the target group. In this project, such an approach was essential for gaining first-hand, concrete insights into the everyday realities of people living in vulnerable situations in Malmi.
- As a general rule: the more thematic and general the subject, the more likely there is to be existing expertise and understanding available. Conversely, the more detailed and specific the topic (especially regarding public spaces and their use), the more crucial it becomes to establish direct contact with representatives of the target group.

4. Conclusions

From the residents' perspective, Malmi is a well-liked area with many unique strengths that are worth preserving. The local residents' wishes for the development of public spaces were, for the most part, highly aligned.

Key themes emerging from the resident survey:

- Sense of safety identified as a central need.
- High appreciation for green and natural areas.
- Strong emphasis on improving mobility and accessibility
- Community-oriented places are viewed more positively than others.
- Desire for more recreational and hobby opportunities
- In addition, Malmi is perceived as having an “image problem” – its best qualities are often overshadowed by the focus on areas in need of development in public discussions.
- Opportunities to socialize and meet familiar people are considered important.

“Ala-Malmi Square is dreary to the extreme — dirty, run-down, and surely intimidating to outsiders — even though, at its best, it could be a green and pleasant oasis connecting Malmitalo and the shopping center, serving as a natural meeting place.”

“The neighbourhood could genuinely be branded more as a village-like district. Here, people talk to each other — this should be encouraged through more meeting places.”

“Those responsible for zoning and planning, as well as politicians, should stop talking about Malmi as if it were a declining area. This repeated negative publicity fuels further negative development. Malmi should be spoken of more positively, and its potential should be recognized.”

“The city should promote interaction and getting to know one another between foreign-language speakers and their neighbors.”



The experience of safety emerged as a central need

The most important theme in Malmi is the experience of safety, which repeatedly emerges, especially in the Malmi center and station area.

Areas perceived as unsafe:

- Malmi railway station and its surroundings
- Ala-Malmi and Ylä-Malmi squares
- Pekanraitti

Reasons for perceived insecurity:

- Substance use and youth gangs
- Poor lighting and maintenance
- Littering and an unclean environment
- Weak visible supervision and lack of accessibility

Residents' development wishes:

- Increased security presence and visible surveillance
- Better lighting in shadowed areas
- Spaces where natural social oversight by others is possible

Green and natural areas are highly valued

Nature and outdoor opportunities are by far the most important factors contributing to Malmi's attractiveness.

Most valued green areas:

- Malmi airfield area (for outdoor recreation and nature)
- Longinoja stream and related stream routes
- Fallkulla and the banks of the Vantaa River

Challenges:

- The green areas in Malmi's center are perceived as unpleasant (especially Ala-Malmi Park)
- Disturbing behavior reduces the sense of comfort and safety

Residents' development wishes:

- More plantings, benches, and picnic tables
- Improved cleanliness and reduction of disruptive behavior
- Protection and highlighting of nature





In Malmi, there is a strong emphasis on improving mobility and accessibility

Accessibility and barrier-free mobility

are repeatedly highlighted as key areas for improvement.

Areas perceived as problematic:

- Station area (poor elevators, escalators, and slippery routes)
- Connection between Ala-Malmi and Ylä-Malmi (difficult to cross the railway)
- Cycling and walking routes in the center are narrow and unclear

Residents' development wishes:

- Accessible and smooth routes to the station and market squares
- Better cycling lanes and safe pedestrian paths
- Improved parking opportunities for local errands

Places that support a sense of community are viewed more positively.

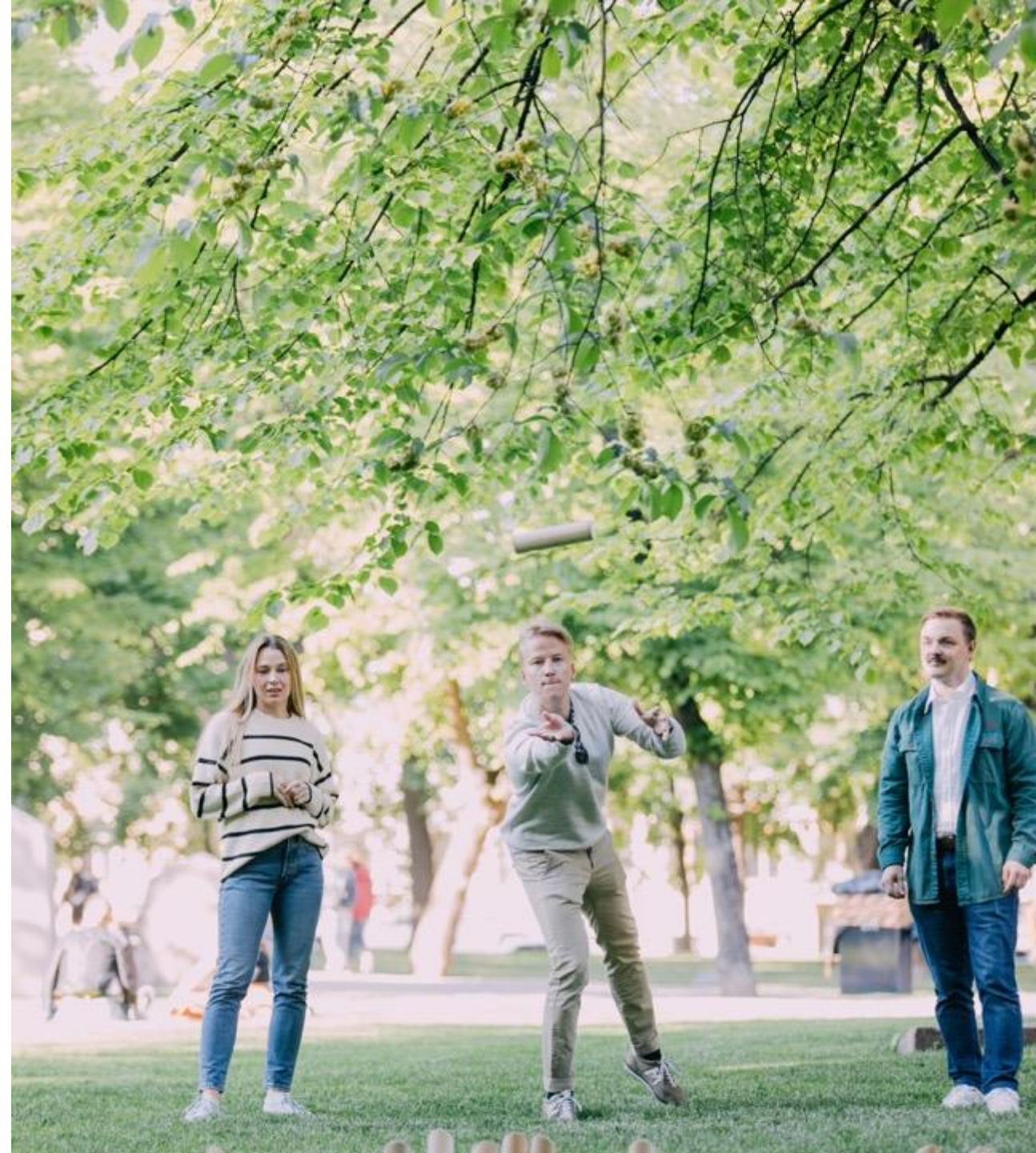
Community spirit is seen as a strength in Malmi, but it needs more spaces and opportunities to grow.

Main places perceived as fostering community:

- Former Malmi Airport (aviation community, jogging, events)
- Malmitalo (culture and low-threshold encounters)
- Swimming hall and outdoor sports facilities
- Ala- and Ylä-Malmi squares
- Playgrounds and daycare yards for families with children

Residents' development wishes:

- More meeting places (cafés, parks, events)
- Spaces also for youth and seniors
- Multi-purpose public spaces that bring together different population groups



Residents wish more hobby and leisure activities in Malmi

There is a broadly shared need among different resident groups in Malmi to increase recreational opportunities.

The majority of survey respondents expressed a wish for more hobby and leisure options, and other research conducted during the project supported this finding.

Identified benefits of hobbies and leisure activities:

- Developing opportunities for leisure activities demonstrates appreciation and creates a caring atmosphere. It can also strengthen the sense of inclusion — something that has been perceived as limited in the Malmi area.
- A way to increase local community spirit, which in turn affects both safety and comfort.
- An opportunity to profile the area and improve its reputation through positive experiences.

Residents' development wishes:

- Outdoor gym / fitness stairs
- Artificial turf field / football
- Nature trail / outdoor recreation / urban gardening
- Guided exercise / park workouts
- Culture / events
- Climbing
- Petanque



Specific and concrete development wishes for public spaces

SAFETY

Security presence and police visibility

More security guards, community police officers, and visible surveillance — especially around Malmi Station and the shopping center.

Spaces and activities for young people

A youth café, youth facilities, and low-threshold meeting places to prevent young people from drifting into gangs or spending time in areas perceived as problematic.

Addressing substance use

A need to intervene in the public use of intoxicants, ensure access to treatment, and remove disruptive behavior from the station and market square areas.

Lighting and cleanliness

Better lighting, regular litter collection, prompt repair of vandalism, and a more pleasant environment.

Improving the cityscape and reputation

A need to enhance Malmi's image, renovate buildings, and promote more positive communication about the area - both outwardly and to local youth themselves.

GREEN- AND RECREATIONAL AREAS

More benches and rest areas

Especially along the Longinoja stream, in Ala-Malmi Park, and by the Vantaa River. Sun loungers and picnic table groups were also suggested along outdoor routes and walking paths.

Cleanliness and peacefulness

A cleaner environment and intervention in disruptive behavior (such as substance use, littering, and public drinking) were requested especially for Ala- and Ylä-Malmi squares and the parks near Malmitalo.

Vegetation and pleasantness

More lush plantings, meadow parks, and preservation of old trees — particularly in Malmi center, behind the library, and in the areas of the former airfield and Kotinummenpuisto. Adding information boards to nature sites was also suggested.

Preservation of Malmi airfield as a recreation area

Keeping the airfield as a green and outdoor recreation area was seen as important — it serves as a valuable place for nature, exercise, and encounters. Losing it would also mean losing outdoor routes and the area's sense of tranquility.

More diverse activities

Residents hoped for an area similar to Töölönranta, with playgrounds, game areas, events, barbecue spots, animals (e.g., sheep), and café activities. Ala-Malmi Park was mentioned as a key development site that could be made more inviting and safer through improved design.

ACCESSIBILITY

Comfort of the station and shopping center area

The station area is perceived as dirty, noisy, and unsafe. Residents hope for improvements in cleanliness and overall clarity of the environment.

Connections between Ala-Malmi and Ylä-Malmi

Crossing the railway is considered difficult, especially for people with strollers, wheelchairs, or bicycles. The stairs next to the Noli building are currently out of use.

Accessible and safe station

Elevators and escalators are often out of order, and the overpass tunnel is slippery. The station's accessibility and maintenance require improvement.

Improving cycling and pedestrian routes

The routes are narrow and congested, especially around the shopping center. Poor visibility and vehicle traffic increase the risk of accidents.

Public transport and parking for errands

The transfer between Sepänmäki and Tapanila is slow. The city center lacks short-term parking spaces for everyday errands.

COMMUNITY

The former airfield as a unifying element

Many respondents suggested restoring the former airfield for aviation and recreational use. The area was seen as fostering community spirit, offering space for events, encounters, and a shared local identity.

Low-threshold encounters

Residents wished for small-scale events, summer concerts, game nights, and workshops — as well as free recreational activities and clubs for families, young people, and seniors.

Spaces and places for togetherness

There is a need for cafés, community houses, playgrounds, and seating areas. The squares and parks were hoped to become pleasant, welcoming meeting places open to everyone.

Cleanliness and safety

Addressing public substance use and disturbances was considered important. A pleasant, clean, and safe environment was seen as a prerequisite for a strong sense of community.

Local identity and participation as strengths

Residents emphasized the importance of being heard and involved in the area's development. Malmi was hoped to develop into a distinctive, village-like district where residents can take pride in their neighborhood.

Summary of Malmi's core strengths and development priorities

Malmi's strengths lie in its sense of community and nature – these are worth strengthening

The surroundings of the former airfield, Longinoja stream, and shared events give Malmi its distinctive identity.

Closeness to nature and community-oriented meeting places — such as Malmitalo and the swimming hall — are strengths that residents wish to preserve.

Community spirit is a strength in Malmi, but it needs more spaces and opportunities to grow.

Malmi is seen as having the potential of a small city

Although Malmi is in many ways seen as an area in need of development, many respondents view it with affection.

Malmi appears as a small city within the city — a place with the potential for a way of life that combines everyday convenience, safety, greenery, and an active sense of community.

Malmi is in need of a more attractive, tidy, and safe city center

Respondents wish for a clearer and cleaner city center as well as an accessible station area. The market squares and the surroundings of the station are perceived as noisy, colorless, littered, and unsafe.

Disruptive behavior limits the use of these spaces.

Green areas are hoped to be further developed and safeguarded from new construction

The green areas in Malmi's center are perceived as uninviting.

Residents wish for more benches, plantings, and clearer spatial designs — especially in Ala-Malmi Park, behind the library, and around the former airfield.

Social cohesion needs to be strengthened and given space to grow.

The responses reflected a perception that certain groups are taking up space from others.

At the same time, these mentioned groups (such as young people and minorities) may themselves feel disconnected or unwelcome, which can manifest as visible restlessness.

People feel they have little opportunity to influence decisions

- 74% of respondents to the survey conducted during the project felt that they cannot influence the development of the area.
- Official communication does not reach all resident groups — particularly those with immigrant backgrounds.
- There is a need for genuine and impactful participation.
- Fieldwork and expert discussions produced similar insights: while participatory planning is being implemented, residents do not see or experience its concrete effects. As a result, fatigue and frustration related to participation have started to increase.

Summary of the methodological pilots and recommendations for next steps.

AI-ASSISTED DATA MINING

Strengths of the method:

- Efficiently processing and summarizing large volumes of data in a resource-effective way
- Continuity and transfer of insights between different projects and studies
- Possibility to combine various data sources and materials from different organizations

Weaknesses:

- Without reviewing the source materials, it can be difficult to assess the content quality of the AI-generated summaries

Recommendations for further development and use:

- Define clear research questions: what is the project aiming for, and what answers are you seeking
- Invest in identifying relevant data sources together with experts
- Pre-process the material: gain a high-level understanding of the content, categorize and prioritize it
- Mine data both piece by piece and comprehensively across the entire dataset
- Experiment with different prompts and evaluate which are most useful for your purpose
- Carefully review the texts produced by AI and verify the final content yourself

LOCATION-BASED MAP SURVEYS

Strengths of the method:

- Online surveys enable very broad participation, independent of time and place
- Cost-effective in terms of individual participants
- Possibility to combine different types of questions (qualitative, quantitative, and location-based)
- Results are immediately available in a digital and easily processable format

Weaknesses:

- Surveys tend to reach those participants who are already active and engaged
- Ensuring accessibility of the survey requires significant time and attention to detail
- Some respondents leave the survey unfinished — attention should be paid to keeping the form concise

Recommendations for further development and use:

- Keep the survey short and focused only on essential topics
- Choose question types carefully: mandatory and open-ended questions are the most demanding
- Allocate enough time to learn how to use the survey tool
- Make deliberate decisions regarding language versions and reserve sufficient time for translations
- Consider which channels best reach your target groups; collaborate with partner organizations to distribute the survey
- Test before launch:** send the survey to team members for testing

ETHNOGRAPHY AND INTERVIEWS

Strengths of the method:

- Enables a highly targeted and flexible approach to reach groups that cannot be engaged through other means
- Easily collects rich data that includes not only participants' responses but also your own observations about the environment and themes that may be difficult to express verbally
- Deepens understanding and helps explain phenomena, potentially revealing their concrete causes and effects

Weaknesses:

- Highly resource-intensive — requires sufficient working time to reach target groups and gather responses
- Requires good interviewing skills and prior experience

Recommendations for further development and use:

- Use these methods selectively, especially when reaching groups that require special attention
- Conduct fieldwork together with an organization or professional who can help reach target group representatives, act as an “interpreter,” and provide contextual understanding for the responses
- Aim to listen to participants openly and on their own terms
- Plan the ethnographic framework and documentation method in advance to save time during the documentation phase

What can other regions learn from the Malmi pilot project?



- There is no shortage of data: **information exists in abundance** — finding and utilizing it is both a challenge and an opportunity.
As a result of this project, new knowledge was generated that validated, explained, and refined existing data. New insights were gained both regarding areas for development and residents' experiences of Malmi's public spaces.
- **Collaboration is key to data sharing and achieving results:** the project identified a need to improve network cooperation, as coordination between actors was found to be insufficient.
- **Superficial participation undermines genuine inclusion:** it is essential to communicate openly how the gathered information will be used and what participants can actually influence.
- Surveys serve as a useful participation and data collection tool for certain residents, but reaching all groups requires **additional methods**.
- Including vulnerable groups requires the **support of experts who understand these communities** — but also direct contact with their representatives to gain a realistic understanding of their everyday circumstances.
- In developing public spaces, the most fruitful approach is to focus resident **insights on phenomena- and location-specific information**.
- Value-, attitude-, and motivation-based profiles could be re-clustered around **the three most distinctive dimensions** (as shown on the right) to explore whether differences emerge in responses among the people within these groups.
- **Continuity and comparability are needed.** The pilot survey can be repeated in other areas in the future.
- Using similar questions enables monitoring development over time and comparing areas within the city.
- The project results can benefit KYMP's experts, professionals working in urban development areas, other cities involved in the Green in Cities project, as well as those interested in applying service design methods.

From individual profiles to clusters

- Those who **emphasize economic vitality and smooth traffic flow** could potentially form one distinct group. The responses in this group reflected slightly more conservative values than those of others.
- Another possible cluster could consist of **supporters of community and vibrant urban culture**. Their responses highlighted the importance of functional services, social encounters, and the richness of diversity in the city.
- A third distinct cluster comprises the **nature-oriented**. However, this group should be better understood, as it represents a very large segment.

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